

Fateh calls for boycott of Jerusalem polls

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (R) — Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) leader Yasser Arafat's Fateh group urged Palestinian residents of East Jerusalem on Saturday to boycott Israeli municipal elections on Nov. 2. A joint statement issued by Fateh and the Palestinian People's Party (PPP) in Jerusalem said: "Our people want independence and to put an end to occupation, not to give it legitimacy by participating in the election." Ziad Abu Ziad, a member of the Palestinian liaison committee negotiating peace with Israel, told Reuters: "I think any positive participation from the Palestinian side in that election means recognition of the Israeli illegal measures and Israeli annexation." The committee, which met for the first time in Cairo on Wednesday, is supervising talks on implementing the Palestinian self-rule accord signed between the PLO and Israel in Washington last month. Under the accord, Israel will begin withdrawing from the Gaza Strip and West Bank towns of Jericho in December. The deal provides for limited Palestinian self-rule for an interim five-year period in Gaza and the West Bank.

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation
جورديان تايمز يومية سياسية مستقلة عن المؤسسة الصحفية الأردنية "الواي"

Volume 17 Number 5437

AMMAN SUNDAY, OCTOBER 17, 1993, JUMADA ALAWAL 1, 1414

Price: 150 Fils



Ali Abdullah Saleh

Yemeni council sworn in without Baidh

Combined agency dispatches

SANAA — Yemen's presidential council reelected Ali Abdullah Saleh as president Saturday in a vote boycotted by outgoing Vice-President Ali Salem Al Baidh.

The official Yemeni news agency (SABA) said the council voted unanimously for Mr. Saleh, who has led the country since the unification of North and South Yemen in 1990.

The council also approved Mr. Saleh's nomination of Mr. Baidh, who has stayed away from the capital Sanaa since July, to be reelected as vice-president.

Mr. Baidh's boycott of his swearing-in was in continuation of his protest against government policy and violence against his party's leaders.

Mr. Baidh has been demanding a timetable for economic and social reform for this country of 14 million and a speedy unification of armed forces from the former North and South Yemen.

The two countries merged in May 1990. In an interview with the London-based Saudi Arabian newspaper Al Sharq Al Awsat, Mr. Baidh accused northern politicians of dominating the united Yemen and spoke of fears for his life.

"I will go back to Sanaa only if there is a job for me to do, as my neck cannot bear another oath-taking," he said.

The five-man ruling council is the council's top executive body. Earlier this month, parliament elected Mr. Baidh to the council along with another member of his Yemeni Socialist Party (YSP).

The other members of the council are Mr. Saleh, a second member of Mr. Saleh's conservative General Peoples Congress (GPC), and a representative of the Muslim fundamentalist Al Islah Party.

Parliamentarians said an emerging trend within their ranks was to elect a new member to the ruling council in lieu of Mr. Baidh.

But political and tribal chiefs also are expected to keep trying to bring Mr. Baidh back into the fold. Mr. Saleh, the president, also has urged "intensified efforts" to end the crisis.

Mr. Baidh's YSP won 56 seats in the 301-member parliament elected in April. Mr. Saleh's CPC got 122 seats. In a surprise result, Al Islah became the second-largest party by winning 63 seats. The remaining seats are held by smaller parties and independents.

Parliament first postponed the swearing-in ceremony on Thursday, when Mr. Baidh refused to break a six-week absence from Sanaa and come from his hometown 300 kilometres south of the capital.

On the second try, parliament went ahead with the ceremony without him, swearing in the other four members; Saleh and his party deputy, Abdul Aziz Abdul Ghani, Abdul-Muhammad Al Zaidani, co-leader of Islah, and Saleh's brother, Muhammad, who is Baidh's deputy leader in the YSP.

Israel-PLO deal could still lead to overall peace accord — Sharaa

Combined agency dispatches

CAIRO — Syrian Foreign Minister Farouk Al Sharaa said here Saturday that the agreement for Palestinian self-rule could still lead to progress in the overall Arab-Israeli peace talks.

Syria, which is trying to negotiate the return of the Golan Heights from Israel, had previously condemned the Israel-Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) agreement as a separate initiative which weakened the Arab position.

Upon arrival for talks with President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt, Mr. Sharaa told reporters that "every possibility was open" following the signature of the accord in Washington on Sept. 13.

The accord could have "very negative effects not only on the Israeli-Palestinian track, but also on the entire peace process and the situation in the region," Mr. Sharaa said.

"It is unrealistic to talk of coordination between Arab parties participating in the peace process as it was before the Palestinian-Israeli agreement was signed," he added.

The Israeli-Palestinian agreement, reached in secret talks in Norway, was signed on Sept. 13. A detailed agenda for Israeli-Jordanian talks was initiated on Sept. 14.

But talks involving Israel, Syria and Lebanon have made slow progress since they began in Madrid in October 1991.

"Negotiations took place and are taking place always between Israelis and the Palestinians without any coordination between the Arab parties, unlike what happened in the past two years," he said.

But the Israel-PLO accord could also have "positive effects because it could put the peace process back on the right track. The days and weeks to

Qatari minister confirms meeting with Shimon Peres

DOHA (AFP) — Qatari Foreign Minister Sheikh Hamad Ben Jassem Ben Jabr Al Thani met two weeks ago with his Israeli counterpart Shimon Peres, the minister said, official Qatari News Agency (QNA) reported Saturday. This is the first time a meeting between Gulf Arabs and Israeli ministers was officially announced.

The encounter took place in New York, in the sidelines of the General Assembly of the United Nations, the Qatari minister said, quoted by QNA. The meeting was "brief" and aimed at "encouraging peace" in the Middle East, "especially on the Syrian and Lebanese tracks," Sheikh Hamad said.

Sheikh Hamad said his meeting with Mr. Peres also addressed the issue of Jerusalem. Sheikh Hamad wished that the Arabs will "recover it."

come will show which of the two possibilities gains the upper hand," Mr. Sharaa said.

He said his recent talks in Washington with President Bill Clinton and U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher, the first of their kind in almost 20 years, revealed "no differences of view" between Syria and the United States.

Washington co-sponsors the peace talks with Moscow. A high-ranking State Department official, Edward Djerejian, said on Tuesday that Israel and Syria were making progress towards signing an accord.

Asked about plans to restart the bilateral peace talks in Washington, the Syrian official said: "If the Israeli side shows seriousness, Syria will be ready to resume these talks at a suitable time."

But he threatened to boycott the next round of talks unless Israel showed willingness to achieve progress.

"We will not go to Washington to participate in sterile and non-profitable talks. We will only go when the Israelis show they are serious in achieving results," Mr. Sharaa said after talks with President Mubarak.

He had told Mr. Mubarak and Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Musa there had been no progress in previous talks in Washington between Israel and Syria, he said.

Mr. Sharaa put the blame on Israel in airport remarks earlier. "These obstacles are not of Syria's making nor of the making of the sponsor of the peace process (the United States) but they are from the Israeli side, which I think is busy with the Israeli-Palestinian agreement," Mr. Sharaa said.

Syria insists Israel must commit itself to a full withdrawal before it will discuss the nature of future relations. Israel says it is ready to withdraw from at least some of the Golan Heights.

But will not say how far until Syria says whether it is ready for a full peace including embassies and open borders.

Mr. Sharaa said a meeting between U.S. President Bill Clinton and Syrian President Hafez Al Assad would give momentum to the peace process in the Middle East.

"In Syria, we believe that a meeting between President Bill Clinton and Hafez Al Assad will help the peace process," Mr. Sharaa said.

Settlers attack Arabs in Hebron

Combined agency dispatches

HEBRON, occupied West Bank — Israeli border guards broke up clashes here Saturday between Palestinians and dozens of settlers protesting the stabbing of a Jewish settler, military and Palestinian sources said.

Settlers beat and slightly hurt five Palestinians and smashed windows as well as car windscreens in the centre of Hebron, in the southern part of the occupied West Bank, according to Palestinian sources.

"During the clash, stones were thrown and windscreens were smashed," an army spokesman said. "A border police force called to the site was forced to respond with shots in the air."

The clash began when settlers went to pray at the Tomb of the Patriarchs and passed by Arab shopkeepers, witnesses said.

Border guards declared the area a closed military zone, a move that includes a ban on journalists, military sources said.

Led by Rabbi Moshe Levinger, a founder of the Bloc of the Faithful group which calls for annexation of the occupied territories, the settlers were protesting the stabbing of a Jewish settler the day before.

The settler was badly wounded in the neck in the market at Hebron.

A hardline Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) faction, the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP), opposed to the accord with Israel for limited Palestinian autonomy claimed responsibility for the attack.

The DFLP belongs to a 10-member alliance opposed to the accord signed by the PLO and Israel in Washington last month. Under the accord, Israel will begin withdrawing from Gaza and the West Bank towns of Jericho in December.

On Friday, an Israeli soldier shot dead a Palestinian in a Gaza refugee camp in the occupied Gaza Strip on Friday, Israel Television said.

It said Anwar Nasr, 22, was caught in cross-fire when troops fired on a car whose driver ignored an order to stop.

Palestinian sources dismissed an earlier report that Nasr had been an activist in the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) based in Damascus and had recently served a jail term for guerrilla activity.

Friday's shooting in Rafah brings to 11 the number of Palestinians killed by Israeli forces since the signing of the Israel-PLO deal.

An adviser to PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat expressed regret Friday about having harmed Israeli civilians in attacks through the years, and predicted extremism would vanish now that there is peace with Israel.

Mahmoud Abbas spoke on Israel Television, displaying unusual candor about a highly-charged emotional issue that kept Israel and the PLO from talking to each other for decades.

Ending "extremism" was also a condition put by Israel to reaching the autonomy accord.

Mr. Abbas, who signed the agreement alongside Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres, said his organisation had "no choice" but to stage attacks in the past, "sometimes hurting civilians."

These attacks were to fight Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, he said. He said Palestinians also were killed both in the occupied territories and in Israeli bombing raids over the years in Lebanon.

"I think that the death of innocent people is not acceptable to anyone, whether of Jews, Muslims, Israelis or Palestinians," Mr. Abbas said.



His Majesty King Hussein Saturday receives PLO Executive Committee member Mahmoud Abbas (Petra photo)

Abbas briefs King and Crown Prince on self-rule negotiations

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — A top official of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Saturday briefed His Majesty King Hussein on the progress of the implementation of the Israeli-PLO autonomy accord signed on Sept. 13.

Mahmoud Abbas, a member of the PLO Executive Committee and head of the Palestinian side to a liaison committee negotiating the implementation of the accord with Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres, was also received by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan.

"No details were immediately available. The Jordan News Agency, Petra, said the King's discussions with Mr. Abbas dealt with "the various regional and bilateral issues and the recent developments in the Arab-Israeli peace process."

Royal Court Chief Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker and Palestinian Ambassador to Jordan Al Tayyeb Abdul Rahim attended the meeting.

The Crown Prince and the PLO official discussed "the recent developments in the

AMMAN (Petra) — A senior official of the British Foreign Office who is on a current visit to the country Saturday confirmed that the British government would honour its commitments made on international donors conference on Middle East peace held earlier in Washington on Oct. 10. William Irman, director of the Middle Eastern and North African Affairs Department at the Foreign Office, was quoted as saying by the Jordanian News Agency, Petra, that Britain would offer economic aid to Palestinians either through the European Commission (EC) or through British institutions. Mr. Irman, who is on a one-week tour in the region as part of efforts exerted by the British government to speed up to Middle East peace process, expressed hope that substantial progress would be achieved on Arab-Israeli tracks. He stressed that his country would continue political and economic support for the peace process on all tracks. During his two-day visit to Jordan Mr. Irman was to meet with senior Jordanian officials to discuss prospects of peace and Jordan's position on various aspects of the peace process.

Palestinian situation and the progress of political negotiations following the ratification of the Israel-PLO agreement by the Palestine Central Council (PCC) last week, Petra said.

Minister of State for Prime Ministry Affairs Jawad Al Anani attended the meeting.

Mr. Abbas, who attended the first meeting of the Israel-PLO liaison committee in Cairo last week, told Jordan Television after his talks with King Hussein and Prince Hassan that the discussions covered the implementation of the autonomy accord.

Also discussed was Jordanian-Palestinian coordination and the work of joint committees, he said.

Mr. Abbas said the work of the joint panels was of "paramount importance since they seek to achieve complete coordination between the Jordanian and Palestinian sides during the self-rule period with a view to reaching a united stand vis-a-vis all issues."

"Some of these committees have already started work and others will be activated soon," he said, adding that the work of the joint panel on economic

cooperation was highly significant in that "it has already worked out a draft document which we hope both sides will endorse."

Mr. Abbas, who signed the Sept. 13 accord with Mr. Peres, said Israel had undertaken to withdraw from all areas of the occupied Gaza Strip except those areas which are needed to offer protection to Jewish settlements there.

"Offering security and protection to the settlements remains an Israeli responsibility at this point in time since we have not reached agreement on removing the settlements," said Mr. Abbas, noting the issue of settlements in the occupied territories was an issue to be tackled in the final status negotiations expected to begin in the third year of autonomy.

Mr. Abbas said the Palestinians and Israelis had not yet reached agreement on the extent of Israeli withdrawal from Jericho in the West Bank. "We are not discussing withdrawal from Jericho town but the 'Jericho area' and are seeking to define how many square kilometres this would mean," he said.

Palestinians deny Israeli report of 'shift' in approach

By P.V. Vivekanand Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Palestinian sources Saturday dismissed as untrue an Israeli Radio report that Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat was opposing Jordanian supervision of monetary and banking affairs of the Palestinians during the five-year autonomy period in the occupied territories.

"The report is distorted and does not reflect the actual position of the PLO chairman," said a senior Palestinian source. "For all practical and technical purposes, the Central Bank of Jordan (CBJ) will monitor the monetary affairs and the Jordanian currency will continue to be in circulation in the occupied territories," said the source, who preferred anonymity.

Israel Radio said Friday that Mr. Arafat did not favour such a role for the CBJ or the Jordanian dinar and that he wanted to set up an independent Palestinian monetary authority and issue a Palestinian currency.

At present the Jordanian dinar is the dominant currency in the occupied territories and most dealings are in the dinar. The Israeli shekel is also in circulation, but, by and large, the dinar is the prevalent.

"It is not a question of choice," said the Palestinian source. "It is a matter of prudent economy."

According to the source, the PLO and Palestinian economic planners did consider setting up an independent monetary authority and issuing a Palestinian currency immediately after the autonomy arrangement takes hold on the ground in the occupied territories.

"But the ideas were frozen for practical as well as political reasons," said the source. "The Palestinian autonomy authority does not have the required monetary base to issue its own currency."

"In any event, continued use of the Jordanian dinar is more practical and politically sound in view of the links between Jordan and the Palestinians."

"An independent Palestinian authority and Palestinian currency look very good in paper as nationalist ideas, but realities dictate otherwise," added the source. "They are not a priority now. The most important objective is to develop the economy of the occupied territories and this cannot be done through independent authorities and own currency."

Under a broad framework for economic cooperation discussed during a visit to Jordan of Ahmad Qureih, head of the PLO's Economy Department, two weeks ago, the CBJ, in coordination with a Palestinian authority, will supervise the monetary affairs of the West Bank and Gaza during the five-year interim self-rule period.

"There has been no change in the situation since those discussions," said the source. "Other ideas could be considered at a later stage, depending on the way things take shape during the interim period."

Jordanian officials declined comment. "We don't see why we should comment on Israeli radio reports," said a senior official.

Prime Minister Abdul Salam Al Majali said two weeks ago that Jordanians and Palestinians were discussing economic cooperation but it was premature to discuss specifics.

Palestinian economists have said that the best course of action for the Palestinians during the interim period was to forge close links with Jordan while trying to develop their own economy through reducing their dependence on the Israeli economy.

Samir Huleileh and Samir Abdullah, members of the Palestinian economic team, said last week that one of the main means for the Palestinian authority to raise internal funds was through issuing bonds in Jordanian dinars in coordination with the Jordanian government.

"It is only one of the significant areas where Jordanian-Palestinian cooperation should come into play," said the source.

Israel is known to oppose any independent Palestinian monetary authority and the issuance of a Palestinian currency. The Jewish state tried during the last 26 years to reinforce the shekel as the dominant currency and the prevalence of Israel banks in the occupied territories, but met stiff resistance from the Palestinians.

559 aspirants file nominations as candidates in Nov. 8 polls

By Suhair Obaidat Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Five hundred and fifty-nine men and women registered themselves as candidates in the Nov. 8 general elections during a three-day nomination period that ended Saturday, officials said.

A report carried by the Jordan News Agency, Petra, said only three of the nominees were women. Reports on Friday had put the number of women at 44, and there was no immediate explanation to the discrepancy.

The officials said the Ministry of Interior will issue its verdict on the nominations starting Sunday for those who registered Thursday; nominations filed on Friday and Saturday will be ruled upon on Monday and Tuesday.

Reuters news agency quoted Interior Minister Salameh Hammad as saying that two applications might be rejected on the basis of citizenship criteria. One, by columnist Hamadah Fara'neh, because he is a member of the Palestine National Council (PNC). Although Mr. Fara'neh said that he resigned from the PNC, the government insists that he is still on its official list, Reuters said.

The other applicant is Nimr Sirhan, a former Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) official whose request for candidacy in 1989 was also rejected for the same reason.

Interior Minister Salameh Hammad said no candidate had been rejected on political

Four nominations rejected

AMMAN GOVERNOR Talat Nawaiseh announced late Saturday that the nominations filed by four aspirants to the Nov. 8 elections were rejected because of failure to meet legal criteria. In a statement carried by the Jordan News Agency, Petra, Mr. Nawaiseh identified the four as Hamadah Fara'neh (First District), Nimr Sirhan (Fifth District), Saleh Al Massadeh and Mohammad Abu Rabbiah (both from the Sixth District). The governor said the four would be formally notified of the rejection Sunday and pointed out that they reserved the right to contest the rejection in court.

The breakdown of the number of applicants is as follows: First District — 21, competing for three seats; Second District — 22 (three seats); Third District — 32 (five seats); Fourth District — 22 (two seats); Fifth District — 42 (five seats); Sixth District — 24 (three seats); Irbid Governorate — 60 (nine seats); Jerash — 13 (two seats); Ajloun — 27 (three seats); Ramtha and Bani Kenanah — 18 (three seats); Al Koura and northern Jordan Valley — 19 (two seats); Al Balqa — 47 (eight seats); Karak — 66 (nine seats); Ma'ar — 19 (five seats); Zarqa — 54 (six seats); Northern Badia region — 13 (two seats); Central Badia region — 14 (two seats); Southern Badia region — 11 (two seats); Mafrqa — 18 (three seats); and Tafleeh 17 — (three seats).

The number of registered voters is 1,461,184, who Saturday started receiving their voting cards in most districts. Only those who have voting cards will be allowed to cast their ballot on Nov. 8.

The governor has three days to rule whether to accept or reject the applications of Mr. Fara'neh and Mr. Sirhan, he told Reuters. A final list of nominees will be announced by the end of the month after the appeal courts rule on the contested applications.

Candidates could start official campaigning only after receiving acceptance of their nominations from the Ministry of Interior.

Although public rallies and debates will not be allowed until the final lists of accepted candidacy applications are announced, signs that the country was in full gear for elections were more than visible Saturday than Thursday, with more banners, posters and leaflets and newspaper advertisements.

The Islamic Action Front, with 36 candidates running on its "Islam is the solution" ticket, complained meanwhile that an application it filed for a permission to hold a public rally on Oct. 22 was turned down by the Ministry of Interior. No reason for the rejection was given. No official comment was available.

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Clinton gets Senate backing for policy on Somalia

WASHINGTON (Agencies) — President Bill Clinton on Friday forged ahead with plans to phase out U.S. involvement in Somalia by March 31 following a qualified Senate endorsement of his new peacekeeping policy.

Mr. Clinton was "delighted with the Senate vote" of 76-23 for a compromise amendment to a defence funding bill that generally endorsed his plan to give the U.N.-sponsored mission more time to succeed, White House spokesman Mark Gearan said.

Turning back a move to legislate a swift U.S. withdrawal from Somalia, a bipartisan coalition of senators instead pushed through the compromise crafted by Democratic and Republican leaders.

The compromise was supported by Senator Robert Byrd of West Virginia, an independent-minded Democrat who initially led the fight for a hasty exit from the battle-scarred East African country.

"I think most people felt it is the right policy in very difficult circumstances. It gives the president flexibility to handle the withdrawal of American forces," Senate Democratic leader George Mitchell told reporters following the vote.

A measure providing funds only for withdrawal offered by Senator John McCain, an Arizona Republican who spent years as a prisoner of war in Vietnam, was rejected 61-38.

The votes, which cut across Democratic and Republican Party lines, came a day after Somali clan leader Mohamed

Farah Aideed's forces released American helicopter pilot Michael Durant after 11 days in captivity.

Watching the Senate floor action was Mr. Durant's sister, Mary Ellen Durant, who said she had wanted a different outcome.

"I don't think it is a wise decision to stay there (in Somalia)," she said.

Mr. Durant was shot down in a Mogadishu firefight Oct. 3 that killed at least 17 Americans and wounded scores more. It was the worst disaster for U.S. peacekeeping troops since the 1983 bombing of a Marine barracks in Lebanon, and brought immediate political pressure to get out of Somalia.

Four days later, Mr. Clinton announced he was reinforcing the U.S. contingent there, narrowing their mission and setting a March 31 withdrawal deadline.

In a letter to Mr. Byrd, the president said that date was the "outer limit" for fulfilling the U.S. mission, and that he would order an earlier pullout, "if at all feasible."

While a victory for Mr. Clinton, a former Arkansas state governor with no military expertise and limited experience in foreign policy, the compromise was far from a complete vote of confidence in his strategy.

It would cut off funds for the Somalia operation after March 31, but allow the president to ask for an extension.

It also set rules of engage-

ment by limiting operations to the protection of U.S. military personnel and bases and helping humanitarian aid flowing by giving United Nations forces logistical and security support.

The measure also stipulates that U.S. combat forces in Somalia must be under the control of American commanders. The overall U.N. operation is headed by a Turkish general.

The House of Representatives has not yet debated Mr. Clinton's new Somalia policy. Mr. Clinton on Friday accused the United Nations of assigning American troops the "police function" of finding those responsible for killing 24 Pakistani peacekeepers in June.

He also suggested that the Bush administration naively advised the American people U.S. troops could be withdrawn from Somalia once starvation was overcome.

Meanwhile, the Clinton administration is backing Ethiopia and Eritrea in trying to get U.N. Secretary-General Boutros Ghali to cancel a scheduled stop in Mogadishu, the Somali capital, next week, according to a senior U.S. official. The secretary-general is on an African trip.

The U.S. official said Ethiopian and Eritrean leaders involved in peacemaking efforts for Somalia do not think the secretary-general would be helpful in trying to reopen a political dialogue among feuding Somali clans.



Pakistani U.N. soldiers check their submachineguns at a U.N. checkpoint in south Mogadishu as a Somali child looks on Saturday. The U.S. government is trying to persuade U.N.

Secretary-General Boutros Ghali to call off a planned visit to Somalia fearing it could thwart peace efforts under way there (AFP photo)

Moynihan assails Kuwaiti emir over Arab trade boycott of Israel

WASHINGTON (Agencies) — A member of the U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee Friday said it was "obscene" for Kuwait and its leader to support the Arab boycott against Israel.

"The most bizarre phenomenon is that the boycott of Israel is now undertaken principally by persons who have had American sponsors," said Sen. Patrick Moynihan (Democrat, New York).

Mr. Moynihan was chairing a committee session listening to testimony about the Middle East by Assistant Secretary of State Edward Djerejian.

Kuwait has dropped enforcement of secondary targets of the boycott but maintains the primary boycott against companies which do business with Israel, Mr. Djerejian said.

"That's obscene," said Mr. Moynihan.

Referring to the many wives the emir of Kuwait has taken under Muslim law, Mr. Moynihan asked:

"Can we get that emir (of Kuwait), between wedding nights, just to concentrate a little while on why he's now in bed in Kuwait City and not in some resort town of Saudi Arabia? Americans got killed in that war."

Democratic Sen. Paul Sarbanes of Maryland said that, far from expanding the boycott, the Arab countries face problems in the U.S. Congress unless there is progress in dismantling it.

"If they put additional companies on the blacklist later in October that would seem to call for a sharp response from

the administration," Mr. Sarbanes said.

Mr. Moynihan said Americans were killed in the Gulf war which liberated Kuwait from Iraqi forces.

"Exactly, and this point has been made very clear and very directly," Mr. Djerejian said.

"But without consequence, right?" Mr. Moynihan said.

Mr. Djerejian, the State Department's top official on the Middle East, said the United States has been told by countries such as Kuwait and others that it will take an Arab League decision to drop the boycott.

"Well, parliamentary procedure at all costs, says the emir, it's obscene," Mr. Moynihan responded, a sarcastic reference to the emir's record of twice abolishing Kuwait's elected parliament.

He said he hoped the U.S. position could be put with "a measure of vehemence" to Kuwait and other U.S. allies involved in the boycott.

"Tell the Saudis the next time (Iraqi President Saddam) Hussein invades them it will be too bad," Mr. Moynihan retorted.

Mr. Moynihan also said that the U.S. Corps of Engineers might be better employed in the Middle East than building mosques.

"In the 1980s, the United States corps of engineers carried out more construction in Saudi Arabia than it did in the United States. We built 87 mosques," Mr. Moynihan said.

He said he once told the general in charge: "General, you know, it's good to get the hang of mosque building. You

never know, you might have an Islamic president and he'd want a mosque up at Camp David," the U.S. presidential retreat.

Mr. Moynihan said the mosques were actually constructed by firms from South Korea after being designed by the corps of engineers.

"Wouldn't it be a lot more useful if we started thinking about the development of the water resources of the area," he asked.

Mr. Djerejian diplomatically avoided the mosque issue and said the United States will use its resources to develop water supplies in the area.

"We have information that on Oct. 24 there may be a meeting of the Arab League Boycott Office in Damascus and that there is some consideration being given to adding a number of companies to the list," Mr. Djerejian told the committee.

Mr. Djerejian said all the Arab countries including Syria had been told by the United States "that this would be a step, obviously, in a very wrong direction."

Mr. Djerejian said he found the Arab boycott "totally unacceptable," especially in the context of the Sept. 13 Israel-Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) accord and an Oct. 1 donors conference that raised \$2 billion in pledges to bolster the agreement.

Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and other wealthy Arab states participated in that conference, and Saudi Arabia pledged \$100 million for the first year.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Britannia docks in Cyprus for Commonwealth meet

LARNACA (AFP) — The royal yacht Britannia, home for Queen Elizabeth II during next week's Commonwealth summit, sailed into Larnaca on Saturday amid tight security, the Cyprus News Agency (CNA) reported. More than a thousand schoolchildren in nearby Limassol meanwhile held a protest Friday against the visit by Queen Elizabeth, who is due to fly into Larnaca airport with Prince Philip on Monday. The students defied their teachers and protested the mayor of Limassol's proposal to award the queen the key of the city during her visit for the Commonwealth heads of government meeting, the Cyprus Mail said Saturday. "Instead of the key, give her the noose," read one protest banner outside the town hall. Some Cypriots have blamed the queen for condoning the hangings of the Cypriot guerrillas during the island's struggle for independence from Britain in the 1950s.

Rebels warn Turkish papers to shut offices

DIYARBAKIR (R) — Separatist Kurdish guerrillas have threatened to attack offices of Turkish newspapers and agencies unless they shut their offices in a southeastern city by Tuesday, local reporters said on Saturday. Newspaper managers will meet in Istanbul to discuss the threat by the Kurdish Labour Party (PKK), they said. "PKK leaders and local managers of newspapers met on Friday. The PKK accused newspapers of being an instrument of the state, and demanded papers and agencies shut their offices in Diyarbakir city," a journalist there told Reuters. The PKK threatened to implement "revolutionary violence" unless its demand was met, he said. The regional governor told newspapers they would be protected and asked them to continue publishing. The PKK has been fighting for an independent Kurdish state since 1984.

Djibouti activist said in bad state in jail

PARIS (R) — A detained leading Djibouti human rights activist is in poor health after six days of a hunger strike, his organisation said on Saturday. The Djibouti Association for the Defence of Human Rights and Liberties (ADDHL) said in a statement that its President Mohammed Houmed Souleuh was suffering from high blood pressure and hypoglycaemia and was unable to stand up or walk. "The ADDHL demands he be hospitalised immediately," the statement said. Mr. Souleuh was arrested on Sept. 15 after alleging government troops had killed civilians and was awaiting trial on charges of slander and spreading false information. He has said he is being held in a cell with more than 150 common criminals, where his safety is seriously threatened. In a letter released by the ADDHL last week he said the Gabode prison was insanitary and violated international standards.

U.S. soldiers injured in Kuwait blast

KUWAIT (AP) — Four U.S. soldiers have been injured, one seriously, in an explosion during a routine military exercise, the American embassy said Saturday. An embassy spokesman, who did not want to be identified by name, said the accident took place Friday. He said three soldiers were treated and released from local hospitals while a fourth who sustained serious injuries was still being treated. The spokesman would not give the soldiers' names or any further details about the exercise or the circumstances surrounding the accident. Hundreds of U.S. soldiers have been stationed at Doha camp about 20 kilometres north of Kuwait City since the end of the Gulf war that liberated Kuwait from a seven-month Iraqi occupation. The emirate signed a 10-year defence pact with the United States that calls for prepositioning of weapons and continuous joint exercises.

Norwegian Rushdie translator operated on again

OSLO (AFP) — Surgeons operated on the Norwegian translator of Salman Rushdie's the Satanic Verses for a second time Friday, cleaning his bullet wounds, the head doctor of Ullevaal hospital reported. William Nygaard's condition was satisfactory, Doctor Johan Fillgram-Larsen said. An unidentified person with a revolver shot Mr. Nygaard three times outside his home on Monday. Norwegian police said Friday that they had no information on the suspected culprit, but they thought the case was linked to Mr. Nygaard's translation of the Satanic Verses. Mr. Nygaard was one of the first people to translate the book of Mr. Rushdie in 1989. The then spiritual mentor of Iran, Ayatollah Khomeini, issued a "fatwa" that year condemning Mr. Rushdie to death, claiming the book blasphemed Islam. In Copenhagen, Danish Foreign Minister Niels Helveg Petersen said the Norwegian government had told him it had as yet no proof that Iran was involved in the attempt to kill Mr. Nygaard. Iran has repeatedly refused to rescind the "fatwa" against Mr. Rushdie.

Mujahedeen denies Iranian report of attacks

AMMAN (J.T.) — The main Iranian armed opposition group, Mujahedeen-e-Khalq on Saturday denied a report that its fighters launched attacks on Iran that killed six people, including two children. The group said in a statement faxed to the Jordan Times described as "absurd assertions" the Iranian report of the attack and said it was part of an Iranian bid to set the stage for attacks on the group's bases in Iraq and offices in Europe and the United States. The Mujahedeen said its operations were always planned and executed by members from inside Iran and were always aimed at officials responsible for torture and executions of innocent people. The report of the killings carried by the official Iranian news agency (IRNA) reflected Tehran's fear of the rebels, it said. The Iranian government was especially alarmed at rebel military manoeuvres held last week, it asserted. IRNA said the killings took place in three separate incursions from Iraq, where the rebels are based. IRNA said Mujahedeen radio in Iraq had recently warned of a "planned assault" against the government in Tehran.

U.S. reproaches Germany on Tehran

WASHINGTON (AP) — The United States and Germany are embroiled in a dispute over German efforts to strengthen ties with Iran at a time when Washington wants to isolate the Tehran government, the State Department said Friday.

Secretary of State Warren Christopher has raised the issue with German Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel, and German officials have been given confidential U.S. data on alleged Iranian involvement in "terrorist" activities, U.S. officials said.

State Department spokesman Mike McCurry said the United States is concerned that a German dialogue with Iran, "combined with extensive trading ties and favourable financial treatment, may encourage Iran to think that it can improve relations with the West without changing its behaviour."

He said Iran's pattern of behaviour "should be most

troubling to the world community."

It is rare for the United States to acknowledge publicly disagreements with a close ally.

Meanwhile, Britain issued a second protest Friday against mysterious talks between German and Iranian intelligence chiefs, but the Bonn government brushed aside the complaints.

Publicity about the Oct. 6-7 discussions have embarrassed Chancellor Helmut Kohl's government.

A German diplomat in Washington, insisting on not being identified, said his government is aware of U.S. concerns. But he added that the European view, which Germany shares, holds that it is advisable to carry out a "critical dialogue" with the Iranian government.

Britain contends the discussions violated a deal reached among European Community

leaders last December not to improve relations with Iran while British author Salman Rushdie is under an Iranian death sentence.

British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd sent a note Friday to Mr. Kinkel, complaining about the meetings between Iran's Ali Fallahian and German intelligence officials, including Bernd Schmidbauer, Mr. Kohl's liaison with German espionage agencies.

"The message reiterated our serious concern," said a British Foreign Office spokesman, speaking on customary anonymity.

Dieter Vogel, Mr. Kohl's spokesman, said Mr. Schmidbauer was in contact with Iran on behalf of other countries. "These consultations were less useful for German citizens than for citizens of other countries," Mr. Vogel said. "These were not political negotiations, but talks about humanitarian cases."

Meese created 'false account' to shield Reagan in Iran-contra case

WASHINGTON (AP) — The special prosecutor's final report on the Iran-contra affair concludes that former Attorney General Edwin Meese concocted a "false account" of an Iranian arms-for-hostages deal to cover up President Ronald Reagan's role, according to sources familiar with the document.

The still-secret report says prosecutors would have considered seeking Mr. Meese's indictment after discovering new evidence in 1992, but the statute of limitations had expired, several sources said.

The report concludes top cabinet officers participated in the coverup, plotting to make "scapegoats" out of Oliver North and national security advisers Robert McFarlane and John Poindexter, according to the sources and notes they took from the report's executive summary.

The report also portrays Mr. Reagan, who has given conflicting accounts of his role in the scandal, as being personally involved in directing advisers in a failed arms-for-hostages deal in Iran in May 1986, the sources said.

Iran-contra prosecutor Lawrence Walsh's report was completed in August but has been sealed from public scrutiny by a federal appeals court to give those named in it time to submit responses. Mr. Reagan's lawyers recently obtained a 60-day extension.

For now, the report is only available to those named in it, and their lawyers. A number of sources provided the Associated Press with a description of its contents, including the notes from the executive summary.

The sources, who insisted upon anonymity, said their notes indicate the final report

depicts key officials of the Reagan administration as scrambling to deflect blame from the president and his cabinet.

"The president's most senior advisers and the cabinet members on the National Security Council participated in the strategy to make National Security Council members McFarlane, Poindexter and North the scapegoats whose sacrifice would protect the Reagan administration in its final two years," the notes quote the report as saying.

"In an important sense, this strategy succeeded. Independent counsel discovered much of the best evidence of the coverup in the final year of active investigation, too late for most prosecutions."

Mr. McFarlane pleaded guilty to four misdemeanors for withholding information, but was later pardoned by Presi-

dent George Bush. Juries convicted Mr. McFarlane's successor, Mr. Poindexter, of five felonies and Colonel North of three, but their convictions were reversed or set aside on appeal.

The scandal involved two covert operations: The sale of arms to Iran in exchange for that country's help in freeing hostages and the diversion of profits from the arms sales to provide military aid to contra rebels in Nicaragua.

The report says a key to the coverup was Mr. Meese's role in creating "a false account" of a November 1985 arms-for-hostages deal with Iran to protect Mr. Reagan in the scandal's early days, according to the sources.

The sources said the new evidence against Mr. Meese was discovered just last year

when prosecutors obtained contemporaneous notes of former White House Chief of Staff Don Regan.

According to the sources' description and notes, the report says Mr. Meese conducted a "damage control exercise" rather than gathering facts when the scandal first erupted in November 1986.

Mr. Meese did not return calls to his office this week. Mr. Walsh declined comment. They and others in the report are under court order not to discuss it publicly.

Over the years, Mr. Reagan has given conflicting statements about his own role.

In November 1986, he publicly denied his administration had engaged in arms-for-hostages deals. But in early 1987, he reversed field and acknowledged that it had. Then, in early 1990, Mr. Reagan re-

verted to his original denials. He also gave differing accounts to the investigatory Tower Commission about the November 1985 shipment of Hawk missiles to Iran. First, Mr. Reagan said he learned of the delivery after it occurred and demanded the Hawks be returned; later he said he could not recall any conversation or meeting about the Hawks.

But the prosecutors' final report indicates, according to the sources, that the president was personally consulted and gave directions to Col. North in the midst of a May 1986 mission that unsuccessfully sought to trade arms in Iran for hostages. The dealings are detailed in summaries of messages between the White House and Tehran, the sources said.

Mr. Reagan's attorney, Theodore Olson, declined to comment Friday.

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel: 77111-19

PROGRAMME TWO
17:30 Film: "Pis Au Pic"
19:00 News in French
19:15 Fatah Sur
19:30 News in Hebrew
20:00 News in Arabic
20:30 Family Matters
21:10 Thirtysomething
22:00 News in English
22:30 Documentary — Panorama
23:10 The Golden Girls

PRAYER TIMES

05:19 Fajr
06:00 (Sunrise) Dhuhr
11:21 Dhuhur
14:35 Asr
17:06 Maghreb
18:34 Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swatish, Tel. 810740
Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 632785
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637400
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757
Terrasanta Church Tel. 623366
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541

Anglican Church Tel. 630851, Tel. 628543
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751
Armenian International Church Tel. 652538
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 624538
German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 684195
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 654922
Church of Nazareth Tel. 675691

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.
It will be relatively hot and dusty with clouds appearing at different altitudes and showers of rain occasionally accompanied by thunderous storms particularly in the southern and eastern parts of the Kingdom. Winds will be northerly moderate to active. In Aqaba, it will be partly cloudy and there will be a chance of showers of rain. Winds will be easterly moderate and seas calm.

Min./Max. temp.
Amman 16 / 30
Aqaba 23 / 36
Deserts 15 / 31
Jordan Valley 24 / 38

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY
AMMAN:
Dr. Ahmad Othman 786384
Dr. Adnan Al Zaghoul 898140
Dr. Ghaleb Zawaidh 736011
Dr. Youssef Abdo 694916
First Aid 661912
Firdous pharmacy 78336
Al Asma pharmacy 637055
Nasroukh pharmacy 623672
Al Salam pharmacy 636730
Yazoub pharmacy 644945
Samciani pharmacy 637660
Najib pharmacy 847632

IRBID:
Dr. Fayez Al Qadi 248743
Alquds pharmacy (—)
ZARQA:
Dr. Walid Halseh 962799
Khalifeh pharmacy 965417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111
Civil Defence Department 661111
Civil Defence Immediate 630341
Civil Defence Emergency 199
Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade 891228
Blood Bank 77121
Highway Police 843402
Traffic Police 896390
Public Security Department 630321
Hotel Complaints 605900
Price Complaints 661176
Water and Sewerage 897467
Complaints 787111
Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121
Overseas Calls 010230
Central Amman Telephone 623101
Abdali Telephone Repairs 661101
Jordan Television 771311
Radio Jordan 774111
Water Authority 600100
Jordan Electricity Authority 815615
Electric Power

HOSPITALS

Company 636381
RJ Flight Information 08-53200
Queen Alia Intl. Airport 08-53200
AMMAN:
Hussein Medical Centre 813813/32
Khaldi Maternity, J. Amn. 642816
Al-Khalid Maternity, J. Amn. 642441/2
Jabal Amman Maternity 642362
Malhas, J. Amman 636140
Palestine, Shmeisani 664171/4
Shmeisani Hospital 669131
University Hospital 843845
Al-Mushter Hospital 667221/9
The Islamic, Abdali 666127/37
Al-Ahli, Abdali 664164/6
Italian, Al-Muhajreen 77101/3
Al-Bashir, J. Ashrafieh 773112/6
Army, Marja 891611/15
Queen Alia Hospital 602240/50
Amal Hospital 674155
ZARQA:
Zarga Govt. Hospital (09)983323
Zarga National Hospital (09)900560
Ibn Sina Hospital (09)986732
Al Hikma Modern Hospital (09)99990
IRBID:
Princess Basma Hospital (02)75555
Greek Catholic Hospital (02)772275

FOR THE TRAVELLER

Queen Alia International Airport

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (08)33200-5, where it should always be verified.

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

08:15 Aqaba (RJ)
08:30 Damascus (RJ)
08:45 Jeddah (RJ)
09:10 Larnaca (RJ)
09:30 Abu Dhabi, Dubai (RJ)
09:45 Beirut (RJ)
10:00 Doha, Doha (RJ)
17:25 Istanbul (RJ)
17:30 Brussels, Paris (RJ)
17:30 New York, Amsterdam (RJ)

DEPARTURES

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

06:00 Aqaba (RJ)
06:00 Beirut (RJ)
06:55 Frankfurt (RJ)
08:50 Tunis, Casablanca (RJ)
11:00 Rome (RJ)
11:40 Vienna (RJ)
11:50 Amsterdam, New York (RJ)
12:05 Istanbul (RJ)
12:05 Athens (RJ)
20:30 Jeddah (RJ)
20:45 Damascus (RJ)
21:15 Aqaba, Cairo (RJ)
21:25 New Delhi (RJ)
21:30 Abu Dhabi, Dubai (RJ)
21:45 Singapore, Jakarta (RJ)
22:45 Bangkok (RJ)
22:45 Sanaa (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

07:45 Larnaca (CY)

HUAZ RAILWAY TRAIN

Dep. Amman 8:00 a.m. every Monday
Arr. Damascus 5:00 p.m. every Monday
Dep. Damascus 7:30 a.m. every Sunday
Arr. Amman 5:00 p.m. every Sunday

MARKET PRICES

Upper/lower price in fils per kg.

Apple 850/830
Banana (Mukannar) 680
Beans 850 / 550
Cabbage 150 / 90
Carrot 440/320
Cauliflower 440/320
Cucumbers (large) 150 / 100
Cucumbers (small) 320 / 200
Eggplant 280 / 200
Garlic 1000 / 600
Grapes 420/320
Guava 440/220
Lemon 210 / 140
Marrow (large) 150 / 120
Marrow (small) 340 / 240
Mushrooms 220 / 140
Onion (dry) 250 / 200
Pepper (hot) 280 / 200
Pepper (sweet) 240 / 200
Potato 400 / 300
Tomato 130 / 60
Spinach 320 / 250



SAFEGUARDING PETRA'S HERITAGE

Her Majesty Queen Noor Saturday inaugurated the Petra exhibition at the Royal Cultural Centre. The exhibition is sponsored by the Petra National Trust (PNT); the Queen is PNT honorary chairperson and patron. Established in 1989 as a private, non-governmental institution for safeguarding Petra's unique physical and human heritage, the PNT stimulates studies and coordination among local and international bodies for the conservation of the Petra region environment, while promoting modernisation. The exhibition will focus on consolidating Jordanian and international efforts towards the preservation of Petra. On display

will be the works of cosmopolitan institutions in the form of panels, pictures, and books among others. The exhibition aims to raise Jordanian and international awareness and interest on the importance of collective work in preserving Petra. Receiving the Queen upon arrival were Their Highnesses Prince Ra'd and Princess Majda. At the opening ceremony, Prince Ra'd, PNT Board of Trustees president, paid tribute to the Queen's continued concern for archaeological and touristic sites in the Kingdom. Queen Noor was also received by Dr. Raouf Abu Jaber, vice-president of PNT, as well as PNT Treasurer Rami Khouri and PNT Secretary Karen Asfour (Petra photo).

Jordan readies for lifting of sanctions on Iraq

By Aileen Bannayan
Associated Press

AMMAN — Jordan, a key transit point for Iraqi imports, is planning to expand the free-trade zone at the Red Sea port of Aqaba in anticipation of the easing of international sanctions against Baghdad, a senior official said Saturday. While there is no indication that the sanctions against Iraq will be lifted or relaxed soon, Jordan seems to be planning to be ready when it happens. Falah Qudah, head of the state-owned Free Zones Corporation, said he was awaiting official approval for expansion programmes drawn up by the corporation, including the expansion of Aqaba's free zone. Aqaba has been crippled by a dramatic decline in Iraq-bound goods since August 1990, when the U.N. Security Council imposed sweeping sanctions on Iraq to punish it for its invasion of Kuwait. Before the crisis struck,

annual Jordanian exports to Iraq were worth \$200 million. Iraq also used Aqaba as the main conduit for its imports since its own ports were damaged and blocked during the 1980-88 Iran-Iraq war. Now Jordan's exports to Iraq are limited to food and medicine, exempt from the sanctions. Jordan estimates its losses at nearly \$600 million in the port and transport sector alone since the imposition of the sanctions. More than 70 per cent of all activities at Aqaba were Iraq-related before the crisis. Mr. Qudah said the Free Zone Corp.'s revenues declined by 9 per cent during the first eight months of this year compared with a 21 per cent increase in 1992. The decline was believed to be the result of Iraq switching its imports to Turkish and Iranian ports following Jordan's tightened enforcement of the embargo.

Jordan tightened its border controls in June 1992, six months after the United States accused the Kingdom of massive breaching of the sanctions by letting contraband material seep across its borders into Iraq. Iraqi traders who once used to crowd Jordanian free zones have dwindled to a trickle and Aqaba now handles mainly Iraqi government imports such as sugar, rice and wheat. Mr. Qudah said the corporation was seeking investors by increasing incentives such as tax holidays and reduced red tape in the Kingdom's free zones at Aqaba and Zarqa. "There will be a big movement of goods once the sanctions on Iraq are lifted," Mr. Qudah said. "We can only hope our expansion plans will meet the demand that is sure to be created in the coming years," he told the Associated Press. The Kingdom's main free

zone area in Aqaba was established in 1973. It now has a built-up area of 25,000 square metres, 300,000 square metres of open space and cold storage facilities for 6,000 tonnes. The corporation plans to increase the zone to 5 million square metres in the next two years to cater to an expected increase in industrial investment. Another 2.5 million square metres will be allocated for a commercial free zone located on the beach, Mr. Qudah said. He said plans are under way to establish two free zone areas at Queen Alia International Airport and at the Industrial City of Sahab outside the capital. Expansion plans will also include the country's other major free zone area in Zarqa. The development plan envisages providing an additional 150,000 square metres to its present 550,000 square metres area.

Food production must be increased by 60% over 20 years — minister

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Ministry of Agriculture estimates that Jordan has to increase food production by at least 60 per cent in the next two decades to sufficiently supply the growing population, according to Agriculture Minister Marwan Kamal.

It is true that the prospect of horizontal expansion of agricultural land is limited, yet intensification of food production can take place by improving the efficiency of farming and through good food production management, said the minister in a message marking World Food Day Saturday. More food can be produced through animal husbandry, the introduction of modern farming techniques and the cultivation of a wide range of plants, said the minister.

Dr. Kamal said that the Kingdom has significant wealth in cultivable lands which are still not utilised. There is dire need for serious efforts to increase food production and this can be



A fruit and vegetable stand in downtown Amman (Staff photo by Aynsley Floyd)

accomplished through cooperation with other Arab countries and with help from specialised U.N. agencies and other organisations, Dr. Kamal stressed.

Neglect of wild life and vegetation results in the reduction of livestock wealth, which could lead to the extinction of certain species of plants and animals, the minister warned.

He said the ministry of agriculture is proceeding with annual plans for afforestation and the creation of pasture lands, and it has enacted laws aimed at controlling hunting.

WHAT'S GOING ON

EXHIBITIONS

- ★ The Petra Exhibition — a presentation of the activities of Jordanian and international institutions involved in archaeological, ethnographic and environmental research in the Petra region at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- ★ Cartoon drawings exhibition by late cartoonist Najj Al Ali at the Pakistani Universities Alumni Club in Jabal Amman.
- ★ Exhibition of handicrafts at Abu Jaber estate, Yadoudeh (next to Kan Zaman).
- ★ Art exhibition by artists Abir Al Bawab, Michael 'Ujjalat, Mohammad Abu Affeh, Amal Mas'ad, and Mohammad Abu Aziz at Abu Nsir Club.
- ★ Art exhibition by artists Mahmoud Taha and Salman Abbas at Ab'ad Art Gallery.
- ★ Photo exhibition displaying pictures from Jordan and Syria by German artist J. Swakowski at the Goethe Institute.
- ★ Art exhibition by Mrs. Lucy Martin, Janine Seaf, and Tete.

Wegelin at the Royal Cultural Centre.

- ★ Art exhibition by artist Ali Talib at the Balqa's Art Gallery in Al Fuhes.
- ★ Art exhibition by artists Dr. Ala Bashir and Sa'di Abbas at the Alfa Art Gallery.
- ★ Art exhibition by artist Mahmoud Al-Ubaidi at the French Cultural Centre.
- ★ Art exhibition by artist Ali Al Mi'mar at the Orfali Art Gallery. Telephone 826932.
- ★ Exhibition of etchings by Mohammad Omar Khalil at Darat Al Fann of the Abdul Hamid Shoman Foundation in Jabal Lweibdeh. Also showing the permanent exhibition. Telephone 643251/2.

FILMS

- ★ Film entitled "Them!" at the American Centre at 5:00 p.m. (93 min.)

Experts discuss why suicides are on the rise and what can be done to prevent them

By Rana Hussein

Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Recent Public Security Department (PSD) statistics indicated a 20 per cent increase in the number of suicides over the last nine years. In 1984 there were only 33 suicide cases, but the number rose to 57 in 1992. The dramatic increase started to show at the beginning of 1990, since then 192 Jordanians were reported to have committed suicide. Major Hussein K. Ibrahim, chief of the Records Department at the Criminal Investigation Department (CID), attributed the increase in suicides to a rise in stress factors, including family arguments, social and economic problems and academic pressures. The CID official pointed to economic changes in the country, saying that since 1989, the currency has dropped, thus, adding economic pressure on many citizens. "We have noticed also a decrease in family values and a rise in unemployment, both of which play an important role in suicide," he added. Mr. Ibrahim said that nine years ago people did not face the same pressures they face now.

In 1984, 387 suicide attempts and 33 suicides were reported. In 1985, the numbers jumped to 573 suicide attempts and 51 suicides, an increase of 48.6 per cent. But in 1986 the number of suicides fell to 33, and the number of attempted suicides decreased to 324. For the next four years the number of suicides remained steady with 48 per year in 1987 and 1988, and 47 per year in 1989 and 1990. But in 1991, more than a year after the Gulf crisis when about 350,000 Jordanians returned to the Kingdom, suicides rose to 58, a 22 per cent increase over the previous four years. Ratios of those who commit suicide, and why, have remained relatively constant since 1984.

For example, young adults between the ages of 18-27 represented 59.6 per cent of suicide cases, the unemployed 22.9 per cent; students, 25.1 per cent; those who fail in school exams, 7.8 per cent; and those involved in family arguments 47.2 per cent.

Walid Sarhan, a psychologist in private practice, said 70 per cent of those who think of and go through with suicide do so out of depression.

"Individuals may reach a certain stage where they feel that there is no point to life and choose to take their own life," Dr. Sarhan said.

"Suicide is a phenomenon that is present in every society in the world, and it is increasing because life is becoming more complicated and demanding," according to Dr. Sarhan, who has treated patients suffering from depression.

He said the addition of 350,000 Jordanians who returned to the Kingdom because of the 1990 Gulf crisis contributed significantly to the increase in suicides in the early 1990s.

With the influx into the population, said Dr. Sarhan, suicides would proportionately increase, but the number of suicides rose further because some of those returning had suffered mental and emotional stress because of the war.

Ismael Abdul Kader, director of Social Defence at the Ministry of Social Development, attributed the increase to failure in meeting life's necessities.

"Failure in meeting life's needs and its responsibilities especially securing employment, hence, ensuring a decent living, can push individuals to commit suicide," said Mr. Abdul Kader.

Poverty, unemployment, depression, family arguments and mental and physical disabilities, all contribute to suicide attempts. In addition, failure in school exams plays a role in suicide attempts, according to Mr. Abdul Kader.



Amman's crowded downtown shopping district bustles with activity. Experts agree that life is becoming more demanding, and increasing stress factors need to be dealt with by family, friends and professionals (Staff photo by Aynsley Floyd)

"When students fail their exams, they feel that they have disappointed their families," and some take the desperate measure of taking their own lives, he said.

Universally, the annual rate of suicide is 25 to 40 per 100,000 persons, said Dr. Sarhan, adding that in Jordan the ratio is significantly lower with one per every 100,000 individuals. Dr. Sarhan acknowledged that the reason the number of suicides are lower in Jordan compared to other countries is because of social cohesiveness. "We hear of high rates of

suicide in the Scandinavian countries for example, because of their complex life and the loneliness people suffer, while here, our society is different, and people are willing to listen and help each other."

But, Dr. Sarhan said Jordan's suicide rate should not be ignored. "The trend is that the number is on the increase, and we have to be careful about this," he stressed. Dr. Sarhan believes that most people do not give suicide and psychological problems the attention they

deserve, and said people tend to ignore such problems.

He blames the cultural barriers, giving the example that if a person suffers from depression the society blames him/her for the illness.

Dr. Sarhan said there are several signs and indications that an individual may be contemplating suicide. He said signs to watch for in such persons include loss of weight, gloominess, silence, depression, pessimism, a withdrawing from family and society, heavy drinking and smoking and losing interest in news and what is going on in life.

"Individuals will see the black side of life never the bright side. It is a state of severe depression which leads someone to this behaviour."

Dr. Sarhan said there are several ways suicide numbers could be reduced in our community.

Hospitals tend to discharge attempted suicide patients easily without considering providing them with professional help.

"Most individuals who attempt suicide are released from hospital without being provided with any professional help which they need because if they do not talk to specialists they will attempt to kill themselves a second and a third time, until they succeed," said Dr. Sarhan. He also blamed professionals and doctors who, he claimed, are discouraged from discussing suicide when treating patients.

"They fear being blamed for the death of a patient, as if their patients will not think of suicide otherwise, he said. Dr. Sarhan acknowledged that open communication and sympathy could help in preventing suicides among friends and relatives.

"If anyone we know displays any of the signs typical of suicide cases, or has already attempted to commit suicide, we should take them seriously and sympathise with them and try to help them in any way possible."

Amman to make fertilisers from city's solid waste

By Elia Nasrallah

Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Amman Municipality is planning to conduct a pilot project that entails producing methane gas and fertilisers from solid waste collected from the Amman area.

The project which is being executed with the help of a Danish firm, is expected to become operational by the beginning of 1994, said an official at the municipality's Public Relations Department.

The rate of daily collection of waste from the Amman area now stands at 1,000 to 2,000 tonnes and is increasing with the rapid population growth and the various economic and industrial development in the

capital, said the official.

The Danish firm will set up a plant to produce up to 40,000 tonnes of fertiliser from the waste collected by the municipality in Amman and will produce methane gas to generate electric power, noted the official.

A feasibility study has been successfully prepared for the \$4 million project, and plans are under way now to start the project early next year, added the official.

In his view, the pilot project will be the first of its kind in the Arab World and the Asian region, and could develop into a technical training centre for countries in the region.

The municipality hopes that the project would increase the

Kingdom's total electric power generation by four per cent, noting that the Danish firm would install special methane-powered turbines for the purpose.

Furthermore, the project should reduce the foul odors rising from the garbage dumping sites since the fermented gas would be absorbed in the plant for the production of electricity, said the official.

Less garbage dumped on the soil means a reduced possibility of pollution to underground water resources, he added.

At present, the municipality estimates that 300,000 cubic metres of methane gas are lost daily in the air, which otherwise could be utilised for power generation.

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Noor Al Hussein Foundation is grateful to
Mr. Samir and Asy Abu Jaber
in holding the exhibition.

For more information, Telephone: 699141/2

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published in English by the Jordan Press Foundation
Established 1975
مؤسسة الصحافة الأردنية

Chairman of the Board of Directors:
MAHMOUD AL KAYED

Director General:
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University Road, P.O. Box 6710, Amman, Jordan.

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The Jordan Times is published daily except Fridays.
Subscription and advertising rates are available from the
Jordan Times advertising department.

So rich and yet so poor

FIGURES RELEASED by the Arab League this Friday, putting the illiteracy rate among Arab men at 35.7 per cent and women at 62 per cent, are indeed alarming. Translated into real figures, they amount to no less than 120 million of the 240 million estimated population of the Arab World. True, the highest numbers are in the poor countries of Mauritania, Sudan and Yemen, but with the Arab World increasingly growing interdependent, these armies of people can only contribute to backwardness, ignorance, poverty and extremism.

Sudan, for example, which has the highest percentage of illiterate women, 88.3 per cent, has in fact one of the highest rates of intellectuals and some of the oldest universities in the Arab World. Yet, years of instability, military rule, coups and counter-coups and a decade-long ethnic conflict have all contributed to this appalling situation.

It is indeed a shame to see the nation, whose Holy Book, the Koran, starts by the word "Read," be among the most illiterate in the world. This cannot and must not be blamed on colonialism or Zionism; only the ruling Arab elites that squandered the nation's fortunes on petty, internal struggles should bear the blame.

Arab leaders and intellectuals have for long now realised the fact that ignorance, and nothing else, is enemy number one. It is responsible for the dismal state of the nation today and it will shape its future. The prospect of generations of Sudanese raised by illiterate mothers is scaring. Especially when men are busy fighting their own wars for power and meagre resources.

Of course, every Arab country is able to defend itself on this score and brandish well-thought of and designed plans to eradicate illiteracy. But these trivial projects will not do. What is needed is a massive transfer of funds from the armament race into education. Now that peace is almost at hand and the cold war is over, there is very little reason why Arabs should continue to buy billions of dollars worth of arms while tens of thousands of their folk languish in ignorance. The rich Arabs cannot shirk responsibility towards their fellow Arabs in this regard. If Europe in its might is fearful of mass migration of people from the southern shores of the Mediterranean, shouldn't the rich Arabs fear an influx of poor Arabs from the Arab "South"?

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

ALTHOUGH THE slogans appearing on the posters in the streets aim primarily at attracting voters, the wordings appearing on these posters reflect the pressing issues and the interest of the public, said Al Dostour daily Saturday. Of course the voters hope that the slogans used in the election campaign will be translated into practice by the future deputies, and it is hoped that those who will be sitting in the Lower House in November will not let down their supporters and will work towards serving national goals, said the daily. This is the first multiparty parliamentary election in Jordan and there is no doubt that like the 1989 election, it will be held in an atmosphere of brotherly cooperation and will be free and fair to all, it continued. It is natural, added the paper, to see candidates putting up slogans and trying to win the favour of the voters by all means, but sooner rather than later these voters will make their choice and they are mature enough to choose only those personalities whom they think will fit their aspirations at the domestic, pan-Arab and international levels. Needless to say that the election campaign is bound to help the candidates win public support for their programmes, but it should be noted, said the paper, that the public is not affected only by the slogans in the streets, they are rather influenced by the personalities of the candidates, their political and tribal affiliations and their past experience and service to the nation. It is hoped, concluded the paper, that the coming election, following the present campaign, would bring to Parliament an elite that would dedicate its time and effort to safeguard the higher national interests and not their own.

TAREQ MASARWEH, columnist in Al Ra'i daily, made remarks Saturday about the posters appearing in the streets of Amman, noting that the slogans are different from those that appeared in the 1989 election. The slogans do not carry major programmes, promising to deal with corruption and unemployment, noted Masarweh. Familiar or traditional names of candidates who ran for the previous election, he said, do not appear this time, and except for the Islamic Action Front and the Baath Party, no other political parties are directly involved in the election campaign, added the writer. In conclusion, he said, the slogans and the names clearly manifest the fact that most of the aspirants to the coming Parliament are running in their own capacity or representing tribes and clans and are supported by family members and relatives.

Sunday's Economic Pulse

By Dr. Fahed Al Fanek

Jordanian economic agenda: Issues to be addressed by working group

A Jordanian-Israeli-American committee for economic cooperation has been formed during the high level meeting in the White House on Oct. 1, 1993, between His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the foreign minister of Israel and President Bill Clinton of the United States.

Jordan apparently agreed to establish this committee in order to make sure that economic issues related to Jordan will not be addressed in its absence and because the Palestinian-Israeli economic committee is not the proper place to decide on matters related to the Kingdom.

In the absence of hard information, it may be inevitable to speculate about the issues which this unprecedented committee will tackle and the items which each party would like to place on the agenda of the trilateral committee.

To start with, we assume that the following issues will be high on the agenda, at least as far as Jordan is concerned:

The first may be the nature of economic normalisation which Jordan can accept after peace is formally achieved. Normalisation, to us, should not mean more than an overall Arab decision to abolish the economic boycott against Israel and start to deal with it, just like any other state in the area, such as Turkey or Cyprus. A common market, a free trade area, or a customs union are out of question, at least in the first stages.

The second issue is control of the bridges. Jordan will not tolerate the status quo where Israel is left to decide unilaterally which commodities or persons are allowed to cross the bridges to which direction and which are not.

The third is Jordan's access to the West Bank market during the transitional period of five years. Jordan is entitled to the same terms and conditions applicable to Israel — The West Bank

should not remain a captive market for Israeli products without competition, otherwise all foreign aid coming to the occupied territories will end up in Israel alone.

The fourth issue is the channel to feed the Dead Sea with water. Jordan prefers a channel from the Red Sea to the Dead Sea via Wadi Araba, after Israeli withdrawal from the Jordanian side of the valley, forming the border between Jordan and Israel according to British maps.

The fifth is the practical arrangement for a smooth return of Palestinian refugees who left the West Bank and Gaza after June 4, 1967.

The sixth is a short-cut air corridor for civil aviation. The 30-minute extra flight-time to avoid the Israeli airspace for each flight from or to Jordan is costing our national carrier, Royal Jordanian, some \$25 million a year.

The seventh possible issue is to coordinate marketing of phosphates and potash in international markets, in order to eliminate the current Israeli malpractices and cut-throat competition, which hurts the two sides.

Last but not least, and since the United States is a full partner in the committee, Jordan will urge the American side to secure more foreign aid to compensate Jordan for the huge burdens shouldered by the Jordanian economy during the past 45 years to absorb three major waves of Palestinian refugees. Jordan also expects a substantial reduction of its heavy debts, just like Egypt and Poland, and the termination of economic sanctions against Iraq which caused Jordan losses that are second only to the losses of Iraq itself.

There is every reason to believe that the above issues can be resolved satisfactorily by the committee.

Arab Americans involved in the 1993 elections

By Dr. James Zogby

THE WORK of becoming a respected political force in a democracy is a continuing process. And so, Arab Americans, though fully engaged in the dramatic developments taking place in the Middle East, are keeping one eye focused on the important November 1993 elections and our domestic political work.

There is a saying in American politics: "All politics are local." For an ethnic community, this saying means that, in order to become a political force, they must be organised and be able to deliver votes and money to support candidates on the local level.

In the past, too many Arab Americans focused simply on the Middle East. When they organised at all, they organised to educate or to lobby on Middle East issues. Their assumption was that if the public and politicians knew the truth, they would change their behaviour and policy and support the Arab cause.

This is not the case. Political power in a democracy is a function of a group's organised voting strength and its ability to support and work in the campaigns that elect the politicians who, in turn, make the decisions that shape foreign and domestic policies.

For at least ten years now, a strong core group of Arab Americans have taken seriously the challenge of becoming a more effective political force. They have worked in their local communities to increase Arab American voter strength, they have formed political clubs in both the Republican and Democratic parties, they have raised money for candidates for city council, school board and mayors and senators and congressmen. And on a number of occasions they have run and been elected to public office.

This is the kind of work that elected 55 Arab Americans as delegates to the Democratic National Convention in 1988 and forced the party, for the first time, to debate the issue of Palestinian rights. This is the kind of work that secured for Arab Americans, for the first time, official recognition as a group in both the Democratic and Republican parties. This is the work that helped Arab Americans win recognition in their local communities and assisted them in gaining elective office, appointments to political posts and access to every level of government. And this is the work that has earned Arab Americans unprecedented access to both foreign and domestic policy makers in the Clinton administration.

Their hard work during the 1992 elections earned Arab Americans respect from the Clinton team. Arab American Democrats knew Mr. Clinton needed to win the states of Michigan and Ohio and so, working with the national Clinton/Gore campaign, Arab American Democrat activists in these states mobilised their community to win votes for Mr. Clinton. The national campaign produced material in Arabic, worked with an Arab American coordinator and organised events to win this vote.

And this summer, when the president needed extra support

to pass his budget through Congress, the Democratic Party turned to their network of local activists to mobilise a grassroots lobbying effort to urge local members of Congress to vote for the president.

Again, Arab Americans were directly involved in the Clinton team. Arab Americans wrote letters, called and visited the 57 members of Congress they were assigned to lobby. And when the budget passed, Arab American Democrats were invited to the White House, together with other constituent group leaders, in recognition of the efforts they made on the president's behalf.

And now, while Arab Americans are actively working with the administration to pursue the peace process, they have not forgotten the lesson that it was their local political work that gained them the recognition and access in the first place. And so they are involved in many of the election campaigns taking place across the U.S. this fall.

Although the November 1993 races are considered "off-year elections" (since there are no congressional, senatorial or presidential races), the many local contests that are being decided are important to both the local issues that affect the lives of millions of Americans and also to a group's ability to maintain its position as a respected political force.

The activity of Arab Americans, in one recent week alone, demonstrates the new political savvy of the national community.

"Winning local office is important not only for the access that it provides to government and decision-makers, but also because an ethnic community's elected officials earn local respect for that community and elevate its standing nationally as well."

In Virginia, the Arab American Democrats and Arab American Republicans combined to host that state's fourth bi-annual *Halla* and Candidates' Night. The respect accorded to that state's Arab Americans was seen in the fact that the event was attended by both the Democratic and Republican candidates for governor, lieutenant governor and attorney general — the three highest offices up for election this year.

This was only one of a few occasions when all six candidates attended the same event to court the vote of a community. All the candidates, including the Democratic candidate for governor, Mary Sue Terry, and her Republican challenger, George Allen, addressed the concerns of Arab Americans in an effort to win their support. Other sixteen candidates for local office partici-

pated and mixed with the 400 Arab Americans in attendance. The fact that 400 members of the community came to the event was important, because the Candidates' Night was competing with a number of other Arab American social events taking place at the same time in the area.

To be sure that their seriousness was appreciated by the state's political leadership, before the night's event began the Arab American Democrats hosted a small fundraiser for Mary Sue Terry. At the event, Ms. Terry committed to working with Arab Americans to support an expansion of Arab Americans' political role in the state and to studying the

raised and contributed nearly \$20,000 to these races, and in addition to local funds raised by Arab American activists, national mailings have raised thousands more to support these candidates.

While the Israel-PLO agreement has reduced problems for most Arab Americans who are seeking to gain influence in U.S. politics, in few isolated cases there are remnants of the old "cold war."

In one race for state senate in California, an Arab American woman, Amal Barkouki, is running for the Democratic nomination. Her opponent, who is Jewish, has sent out a fundraiser to local Jewish Americans which call for their

formation of a Virginia-Arab Trade commission. At the weekend, Arab Americans in Michigan gathered at a political leadership training conference. Co-sponsored by ten Arab American organisations, the event drew 150 Arab American activists to a full day's programme of workshops and panels on political organising, voter registration, lobbying and involvement in the political parties.

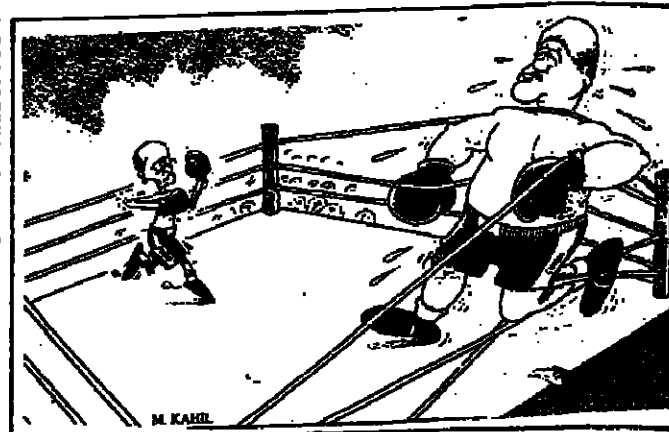
The event was addressed by a number of locally elected officials and political leaders. The night before the conference, the entire community was invited to Candidates' Night which drew 50 candidates for local and state offices. Especially important to the Michigan Arab American community are the reelection campaigns of two Arab American city council members, Suzanne Sarsini in Dearborn and Peter Nicholas in Ann Arbor.

Both these incumbents first won their seats four years ago, with strong Arab American community support, becoming the first Arab Americans to win elections in their communities. Their reelection, with organised Arab American support, is vital to show that Arab Americans will continue to be a committed political force.

Winning local office is important not only for the access that it provides to government and decision-makers, but also because an ethnic community's elected officials earn local respect for that community and elevate its standing nationally as well. That is why Arab Americans are coming to understand the need to support these Arab Americans as they run for office, wherever they are located.

This fall, 20 Arab Americans are running in the "off-year elections." They include seven candidates for mayor (of whom six are incumbents seeking reelection), four candidates for state legislature and nine for city council. Already the Arab American community has

The writer is president of the Washington-based Arab American Institute. He contributed this article to the Jordan Times.



Somalia stakes: Small for America, big for Clinton

By Jim Hoagland

WASHINGTON — Bill Clinton believes that America's global leadership must now be rescued in the barren wastes of Somalia. He balances an elephant on a mouse.

His speech on Thursday, with its air of world crisis, was more of an indictment of his administration's mismanagement of a small, incidental conflict that is allowed to get out of hand than a national call to arms to confront a grave threat.

America's credibility and prestige are at stake whenever and wherever American presidents engage them. There is no permanent loss or a permanent repair of the power that America commands on the world scene, as Vietnam and Operation Desert Storm both proved. That is why presidents must choose carefully in committing that power when America's interests are not directly attacked. The stakes become what the president says they are, at least temporarily.

Mr. Clinton defines the national choice in Somalia as leaving in dishonour or staying to protect American credibility. That is a description of the dilemma that no president should ever allow himself to be sucked into.

The "dishonour/credibility" dilemma is vague enough to let enemies and friends manipulate American purpose for their own ends. It inevitably invites the president to confuse his own political reputation with America's standing in the world. At it allows intangible, emotional factors to dictate the expenditure of valuable American lives and treasure.

There is no U.S. national interest at stake in Somalia beyond three intangibles created by the American presence there: U.S. reputation, the damage that American withdrawal does to American allies and the United Nations, and the U.S. ability to avenge American losses. Those are serious concerns. But they would not exist if American troops had never gone to Somalia and become engaged in a small war against a local rogue.

So I think the president erred in getting the nation to this point. But even those of us who have been sceptical from the outset of the military aspects of the Somali operation cannot press for an immediate withdrawal of U.S. troops in the circumstances that Mr. Clinton described.

The debate is about how America leaves, not whether America leaves. The choice Mr. Clinton has confronted Americans (and the world) with is leaving Somalia precipitously and callously or leaving in a controlled fashion that minimises the damage already done. If Mr. Clinton and his advisers can successfully manage a last chance to achieve a realistic mix of goals and means in Somalia, the world will be better off than if America abandoned Somalia overnight.

Beneath Thursday's "We must draw the line" rhetoric was a fundamental acknowledgement by the president that no new world order or model for African democracy will come out of the modest increase in U.S. forces that he announced. His goal is now to give Somalia "a reasonable chance" to end its political chaos and perpetual starvation. He must stick to that reasonable measures.

He should also be modest about what America can reasonably expect to accomplish in the way of retribution against Mohammed Farah Aided and in deterring other international bandits. The prospects of accomplishing either are too uncertain to justify significant new loss of life by Americans or innocent Somalis. Revenge, while a powerful human emotion, is not a sustainable national interest or the basis for a wise policy. There comes a point at which the desire for retribution and the implausible notion that punishment will deter future Aidedes must give way to a realistic assessment of the costs in American and Somali lives.

The Somalis have a proverb that the president should consider as he sets limits on what American troops will now do in Somalia: "In the ocean, one does not need to sow water." Somalis do not need Americans to rain violence and destruction down on them, any more than American need to travel halfway around the world to be urban policemen.

"The debate is about how America leaves, not whether America leaves. The choice Mr. Clinton has confronted Americans (and the world) with is leaving Somalia precipitously and callously or leaving in a controlled fashion that minimises the damage already done. If Mr. Clinton and his advisers can successfully manage a last chance to achieve a realistic mix of goals and means in Somalia, the world will be better off than if America abandoned Somalia overnight."

American objectives have veered off course in Somalia as President Clinton has been absorbed in domestic affairs and as his foreign policy advisers have failed to fashion a coherent approach in his absence. The one constant has been the refusal to devote political and diplomatic attention commensurate to the demands placed on American soldiers there.

Until now, the president has ignored the first law of politics: When you get yourself in a hole, stop digging. Now he plays the role of a movie cowboy brandishing his revolver to cover his retreat as he backs out the saloon door.

A successful exit will require President Clinton's sustained attention and effort. His high profile support for a regional diplomatic solution to be negotiated by Ambassador Robert Oakley is a good beginning.

America's world leadership will eventually recover even if this administration flubs the exit and Somalia goes back to a disaster. Bill Clinton's reputation for leadership would not — The Washington Post.

Letters to the Editor

The Jordan Times welcomes letters and contributions from its readers on any subject they wish to tackle. Letters intended for publication, however, should contain the writer's full name and preferably address as well. Names can be withheld only upon request and under special circumstances. Letters are subject to editing. The newspaper is not responsible for the return of unused manuscripts.

Yeltsin media crackdown stirs fears for future

By Ralph Boulton
Reuters

MOSCOW — President Boris Yeltsin has cracked down on the communist press, arguing that the cancer of communism must be subdued so democracy can live.

But many leading journalists fear democracy could be the first victim as Russia prepares for parliamentary elections.

Russia's Press and Information Ministry ordered the sacking of the editors of two communist dailies on Thursday. The action had no apparent basis in law and the manner of its execution recalled the Soviet era.

A curt fax conveyed the order to Sovetskaya Rossiya and Pravda. The latter was also told to change its name to put Pravdy (path of truth), a title it carried to beat tsarist censorship 80 years ago.

As press minister I proceed from the assumption that the state should have its ideology," said Vladimir Shumeiko, appointed press and information minister after the crushing of a hardline mutiny early this month.

"The principles of democracy and the free market are all the same ideology. I think the state should have a powerful state-owned mass media to promote this ideology," he told journalists.

Georgy Satarov, a liberal



Boris Yeltsin

adviser to Mr. Yeltsin, called Mr. Shumeiko's words "the summit of totalitarian ideology."

In the aftermath of the Moscow uprising, in which more than 170 died, it is the radicals such as Mr. Shumeiko and Mr. Yeltsin Media Adviser Mikhail

Poltorin who hold the upper hand.

More liberal aides who coaxed the president through a year of fruitless negotiation with parliamentary opponents take a back seat.

Igor Golembiowski, editor of the liberal Izvestia newspaper, said he believed Mr. Yeltsin

had no personal authoritarian designs.

"But in a country as large as Russia, the president alone doesn't decide," he told Reuters. "Various groups vie for influence. One has won a victory and doesn't want to lose it."

He saw the sacking of the two editors and summary banning of other more militant nationalist and communist publications as posing a broader threat to the media and democracy.

"The political situation in Russia has developed along such lines that the media are the only possible opposition," he said.

Militant opposition organisations such as the communists, who had supported the parliamentary rebellion, had been banned.

"They therefore have no direct channel for influencing public opinion. Now the last channel, the press, is becoming the object of attention from state authorities. I think this is a dangerous process," he said.

Viktor Loshak, deputy editor of Moscow News Magazine, said Mr. Yeltsin was failing to distinguish between newspapers that had openly provoked bloodshed and legitimate opposition. The former should be shut, but by the courts and not by personal whim.

He saw a danger Mr. Yeltsin

could push the opposition on to the streets in the campaign for December's parliamentary elections.

"The political pulse beats on. There are people who support the communists and socialists and they do not go away. If their opinion is not expressed in newspapers it may come out at night in wall slogans, stickers or leaflets. If there are leaflets then the danger is we may experience all that can follow — underground organisations, terrorist red brigades."

A state of emergency, imposed by Mr. Yeltsin at the height of the Oct. 3 uprising, is expected to be lifted on Sunday or Monday. But radical aides such as Gennady Burbulis say the danger of a "reactionary-revolutionist" movement remains.

He may be right. Russia today is not a western-style liberal democracy. The arms and violence that entered the political debate in early October were not purged with the storming of the White House.

The argument of Mr. Yeltsin's radical advisers, in essence, is that militants ready to use arms and deceit cannot be purged using the instruments of courts and litigation alone. As Mr. Yeltsin said when he abolished parliament on Sept. 21, triggering the crisis, the interests of the nation are more

important than those of "formal adherence to norms."

Some supporters of Mr. Yeltsin's reforms nonetheless fear the interests of the nation could be lost in a power struggle of the victors around the president. The media may be one victim, but the losses could

go deeper as the elections approach.

"The democratic organisations will fall into several structures which will spare nothing in fighting each other and their opponents for seats in parliament," Mr. Golembiowski said.

"In this way they may begin to lose. It's one thing to have supporters in Moscow, but another matter out there in the distant Russian provinces. The Russian democratic movement, in the broad sense, is mistaken in thinking it is bound to win the elections."

Eastern European hopes fade on quick NATO membership

By Nicholas Doughty
Reuters

BRUSSELS — Eastern European hopes that they could join North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) soon are fading fast, as western leaders — under pressure from Russia — line up to tell them that expanding the alliance is some way off.

A string of statements from NATO members in recent days has made clear that an alliance summit in January will not immediately open the door for countries like Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic to join.

Germany, which has pushed the hardest for NATO to take in some former Warsaw Pact members who are worried about regional instability and the chaos in Russia, has now toned

down its support in what diplomats said was the most significant change.

Denmark and France have also said they do not favour rapid changes, while the United States, NATO's senior member, appears undecided so far.

German Chancellor Helmut Kohl has said he thought expanding NATO was a question for "a further-off future."

Germany and other NATO members got a shock earlier this month when Russian President Boris Yeltsin sent them a letter in which he said Moscow "clearly" feared isolation, disapproval of expanding the alliance eastwards.

But the armed rebellion in Moscow last week powerfully reinforced Mr. Yeltsin's message, showing NATO that it

could risk much if it upsets hardliners in Russian political and military circles by taking on new members.

Mr. Kohl alluded to fears that Europe's biggest military power could turn against the West if it was not handled in a sensitive way. "I know that everything that would come after Yeltsin would be much more difficult," he said.

German Defence Minister Volker Ruehe has also been careful to underline recently that NATO should make Russia what he calls a "strategic partner", rather than isolate it.

"Russia is a very important factor for lasting stability in Europe as shown in the past few days," he said last week. "We will only achieve stability with, not against, Russia."

Denmark said on Monday Eastern European nations should not expect to join soon, citing another argument — that expanding the alliance could weaken its internal cohesion at a time of great instability in Europe.

"Nobody can ask us to jeopardise our own security," said Danish Prime Minister Poul Nyrup Rasmussen.

French Foreign Minister Alain Juppe said last week he did not believe NATO should be expanded immediately.

The problem for NATO is how it should balance support for Russia with the increasingly urgent demands of Eastern European states who say that the problems in Moscow serve only to underline why they should be admitted to the alliance soon.

Poland, Hungary, the Czech

Republic and Bulgaria have said their goal remains unchanged and they are unwilling to consider Mr. Yeltsin's alternative proposal — that Russia and NATO should jointly guarantee their security.

NATO has so far refused to offer its former enemies membership or security guarantees but has given them closer diplomatic and military ties through a "Cooperation Council" that now groups more than 30 countries.

"It's now clear we can't do much for just one group of countries at the January summit," said one NATO official.

"We have to limit ourselves for now to developing a two-track approach that offers something real to everyone in terms of improved links, including Russia."

Commonwealth seeks new focus as apartheid rallying call fades

By Peter Bale
Reuters

LONDON — The commonwealth is seeking to redefine itself now that the end of apartheid in South Africa has robbed it of its great rallying point and source of tension.

Leaders of 48 of the 50 member states meet in Cyprus next week to give new direction to the organisation which critics say is an irrelevant and unwanted legacy of colonialism.

As usual, South Africa — which pulled out of the Commonwealth in 1961 — is expected to be a major talking point.

With the emergence of a multi-racial South Africa, debate promises to be more constructive than traditional rows between Britain and African states demanding action against Pretoria.

This year the Commonwealth, which groups Britain and its former colonies, may look deeper at what its role should be in helping South Africa in its shaky transition to democracy rather than penalising it for its racial policies.

"We can prove that the Commonwealth is about more than confrontation on South African issues," British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd said in a speech in advance of the meeting.

Commonwealth Secretary-General Chief Emeka Anyaoku hopes the meeting can address the promotion of democracy and economic development in South Africa and elsewhere.

"If people remain wretchedly poor and starving then democracy and respect for human rights will mean nothing," he says. "So we pay equal attention to what the Commonwealth can do to assist the socio-economic development of its members."

The Commonwealth must also practice what it preaches. Mr. Anyaoku takes pride that only three Commonwealth states remain under military or one-party rule — down from eight in 1991.

For a long time the Com-

monwealth seemed vulnerable to the charge that it declared itself in favour of noble principles and yet a number of its members were always found wanting," he says.

The last Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in Harare in 1991 helped shape a new course. It produced a declaration calling for "renewed vigour" in promoting democracy and developing market economies in member states.

Some critics say that the week-long Commonwealth meetings are a no more than a time-wasting gentlemen's club.

"I'm a little bit sceptical about its future," says Professor

Jack Spence of the Royal Institute of International Affairs. "But I think it's useful in a symbolic sense. It bridges the gap between first world and Third World states."

The South African government has a difficult relationship with the Commonwealth, an enemy from the old apartheid days. But the African National Congress (ANC), which expects to be the biggest party in the first democratically-elected government, sees it as an important partnership.

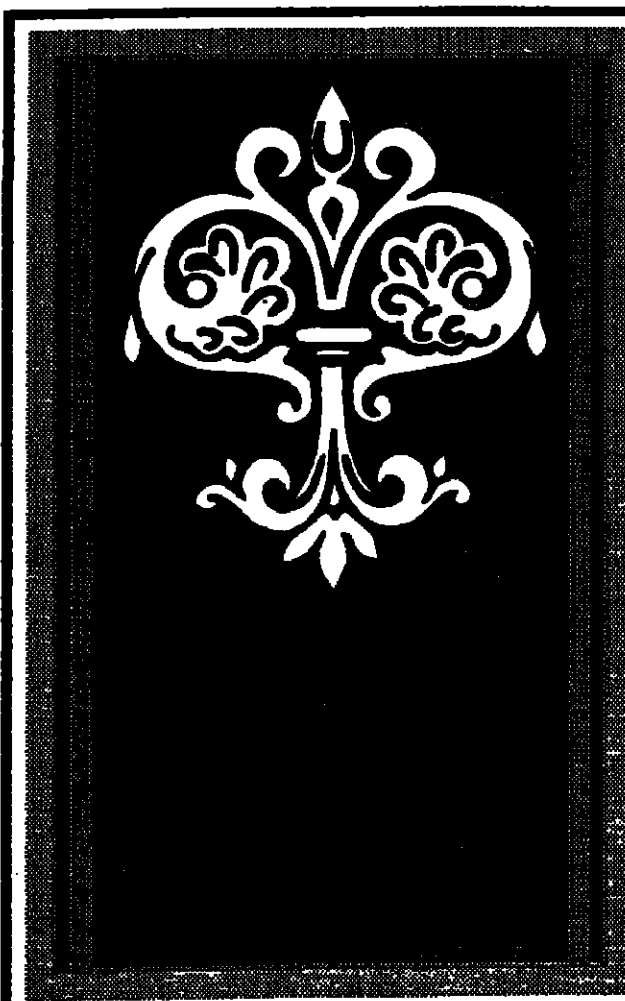
South Africa is expected to rejoin under a government led by ANC chief Nelson Mandela after elections due next April. "It's an important bridge be-

tween European interests and Africa," said a senior ANC official. "It's the only one to bring the north and south, east and west together."

Such rhetoric pleases Commonwealth enthusiasts.

When British Prime Minister John Major meets other Commonwealth leaders he does so not with the baggage of colonial master and permanent member of the U.N. Security Council but as an equal, according to the organisation's supporters.

"Membership of the Commonwealth is a comfortable, loose-fitting garment round our shoulders," said Mr. Hurd. Other states see it similarly



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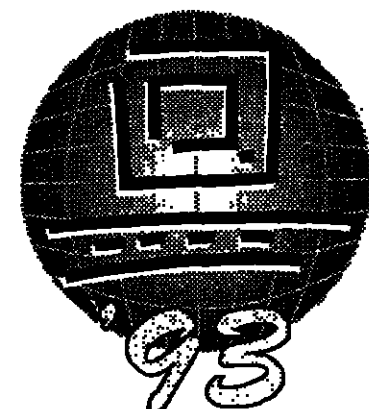
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Yeltsin calls constitutional vote Russia's Choice starts campaign

MOSCOW (R) — Russia kicked off its parliamentary election campaign Saturday when a major group backing President Yeltsin held its founding congress promising economic stability and order if it wins.

But the president himself failed to show up, saying that although he backed the aims of the group, called Russia's Choice, he had to be seen to represent all Russians.

Leading reformer Yegor Gaidar, who returned to Mr. Yeltsin's administration last month not long before it put down a bloody hardline revolt on Oct. 3-4, told about 1,000 delegates Russia's Choice could promise a better life only after the Dec. 12 parliamentary vote.

"This will be a party of order, of democratic and market order," he said in the congress hall, which was decorated with election posters showing reformist Tsar Peter the Great on horseback and with mock-ups of traditional Russian landmarks such as Moscow's onion-domed St Basil's Cathedral.

The aim is to turn the bloc into a party.

"We cannot offer a lot but we can promise a stable currency, stable power, stable legislation protecting private property and the distribution of state funds to protect those in need," said Mr. Gaidar, a first deputy prime minister and the driving force behind the grouping and Mr. Yeltsin's

market reform programme.

Post-Communist Russia suffers from rampant inflation, a large budget deficit and has embarked on a transition to a Western-style economy.

Power struggles, which culminated in this month's bloodshed, have meant political instability and also hampered reforms.

The chief of Mr. Yeltsin's administration, Sergei Filatov, said the president sent his greetings to the congress and added Russia's Choice should become the "start of the consolidation of all democratic forces in Russia."

"Despite his political sympathies, he will not take part in today's congress," Mr. Filatov said, saying Mr. Yeltsin felt he had to represent all Russia's 150 million people.

Two other smaller groupings were holding similar congresses Saturday.

Mr. Yeltsin Friday moved to strengthen his grip on power by ordering a referendum on a post-Soviet constitution to be held on the same day as the vote for a new two-chamber legislature.

The existing constitution was at the heart of the conflict with parliament, which Mr. Yeltsin disbanded on Sept. 21. After a siege and standoff, forces loyal to Mr. Yeltsin stormed the White House parliament building on Oct. 4.

Scores died and dozens were captured. But some rebels

escaped through secret tunnels.

The Security Ministry said it had captured one of the Kremlin's most wanted men, hard-line nationalist deputy Ilya Konstantinov, who fled the White House.

It said security police arrested him without a struggle Friday. He was not armed but had shaved off his beard to change his appearance. He is being held in Moscow's Lefortovo Prison, where other hard-line parliamentary leaders are incarcerated.

On Friday, the prosecutors began presenting charges against top Yeltsin foes, including Parliament Chairman Ruslan Khasbulatov and sacked Vice-President Alexander Rutskoi.

The charges were for organising mass disturbances, an offence carrying a maximum 15-year jail term.

Mr. Yeltsin said Friday the referendum would take place on Dec. 12, the same day as parliamentary elections, to try to speed up work on replacing a much-amended constitution first introduced in Communist times.

"Work on the constitution has been going on for almost three years, which is more than long enough," Mr. Yeltsin said in a televised interview.

He said a referendum was the most democratic way to change the system.

"The time of Soviet power is

coming to an end," Mr. Yeltsin told the television interviewer. "Thank God for that."

In other moves to strengthen his position Friday, Mr. Yeltsin changed the electoral law to allow government ministers to run for seats in the lower chamber, the state Duma.

This improves his chances of being supported by the new legislature. The old parliament often challenged him.

Mr. Yeltsin also sacked First Deputy Prosecutor-General Yevgeny Lisov, moved two deputies to other posts and named four new deputies to the prosecutor-general, ITAR-TASS news agency said.

It gave no reasons but Mr. Yeltsin appeared to be moving supporters into the top ranks of the legal authorities.

Other moves to consolidate Mr. Yeltsin's power since the rebellion have included measures to bring rebellious regional authorities into line and a crackdown on opposition media.

The Kremlin said a state of emergency in force in Moscow since Oct. 3 would be lifted as planned on Oct. 18, but a senior legal official said a strong police contingent would remain in the capital.

Meanwhile, the families of conservative deputies who took part in the parliamentary rebellion against President Yeltsin were ordered Friday to leave their government-owned flats, Interfax reported.

Serbs pound Sarajevo with artillery

SARAJEVO (R) — Serbs pounded Sarajevo with a barrage of artillery rounds Saturday, shutting down the city's airport in the heaviest shelling of the Bosnian capital for several weeks.

Sarajevo Radio said the Bosnian government army retook the town of Cazvin in the break-away Muslim enclave of Bihać after rebel Muslims captured it without a fight Friday. The Bosnian government radio report could not be confirmed independently.

Led by the northwestern Bihać pocket's self-declared President Fikret Abdić, the rebels declared autonomy last month when Sarajevo effectively rejected the latest Geneva peace plan.

The artillery barrage on Sarajevo started early Saturday morning and went on through the afternoon, together with sniper and machinegun fire, a Reuters journalist reported.

The U.N.-controlled Sarajevo Airport was closed because of the attack, United Nations officials said.

It was not clear when the U.N. would reopen the airfield, which is a vital link for aid to the city's 380,000 inhabitants who receive most of their relief supplies by air.

Colonel Bill Aikman, a spokesman for the U.N. Protection Force, said Muslim-led Bosnian units had fired about 10 mortar rounds at the Serbs

just before dawn. Serb forces responded with heavy artillery into the old town district of the capital.

Col. Aikman said the Serbs were using 151mm artillery. "That's pretty heavy stuff," he told reporters.

One of the city's main hospitals reported four people wounded by sniping and shelling Saturday morning. More casualties were expected.

Col. Aikman said the Serbs used tanks to fire at the suburb of Dobrinja near the airport and had moved more tanks into the area. "There are more tanks out there than normal," he said.

A house used by U.N. military observers to monitor the fighting had been targeted by mortar fire, assumed to be from the Serbs, Col. Aikman said. Four rounds landed in the garden, blowing out the windows but causing no casualties.

Describing the Serb response to the 10 or so Bosnian mortar rounds fired early Saturday morning, Col. Aikman said: "You spoke me in the chest, I found the living daylight out of you, that's sort of the routine around here."

Col. Aikman said the Serbs were moving troops around Sarajevo.

"There have been a whole series of troop movements around the town, but one cannot predict whether it's an attack or whether it's just a movement of troops."

Homeland chief: De Klerk is award disgrace

JOHANNESBURG (R) — The ruler of the Transkei black homeland said Saturday the awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize to South African President F. W. De Klerk was a disgrace.

Major-General Bantu Holomisa said Mr. De Klerk did not deserve it because of a South African army raid on an alleged guerrilla base in Transkei last week in which five youths were killed.

Mr. De Klerk, who was jointly awarded the peace prize with African National Congress (ANC) leader Nelson Mandela Friday for their efforts to end the white domination of South Africa, has acknowledged he sanctioned the raid.

"It is a disgrace that a man who sanctioned a cross-border raid which led to the killing of youngsters could be awarded such a prestigious peace prize," Gen. Holomisa told Reuters by telephone from his capital Umtata.

The military ruler appealed to all organisations as well as groups taking part in South African democracy talks to join him in pressing for the award to be withdrawn.

Mr. De Klerk's government said it attacked a house in the nominally independent homeland because it was used by the Azanian People's Liberation Army (APLA).

The APLA, armed wing of the black Pan Africanist Congress (PAC), denies this and says all the victims were children.

Gen. Holomisa Saturday gave South African ambassador to the tribal homeland

Horace Van Rensburg until noon Monday to quit his post.

Speaking at the funeral here for the five youths slain by South African commandos, Gen. Holomisa said he had proof that the Oct. 8 raid had been coordinated from the South African embassy in Umtata.

More than 10,000 people crowded into a stadium in the Transkei capital Saturday to mourn the five youths.

The rest of the city was peaceful and nearly deserted. Shopkeepers closed for the day in fear of unrest after a memorial service for the five victims Wednesday erupted into rioting.

Winnie Mandela, a militant member of the African National Congress, told the mourners Saturday that ANC and Pan Africanist Congress guerrillas should join forces in response to the deaths of the five youths, three of whom were sons of a PAC activist.

"If we do not unite after this massacre here in this town, we shall never unite again," she said as the funeral service began.

The ANC's armed wing has laid down its weapons, and Nelson Mandela and other negotiators have opened talks with the government on ending apartheid. Militants like Winnie Mandela, estranged wife of the ANC leader, have accused the ANC leadership of selling out poor blacks in a rush to get into power.

The PAC also is negotiating with the government, but has not called off its armed struggle.

Criticism mounted Saturday over the awarding of the Nobel

Peace Prize to Mr. De Klerk, with black hardliners saying he did not deserve to share the honour with Mr. Mandela.

A backlash had been expected by Nobel Committee Chairman Francis Sejersted who, in announcing the award Friday, said some people might not regard Mr. De Klerk and Mr. Mandela men of peace and admitted the committee was "taking a risk."

While world leaders and moderate South African leaders have hailed the decision, the announcement was received with hostility in extremist circles in South Africa.

The Pan Africanist Congress (PAC), which broke away from Mr. Mandela's African National Congress in 1989 over whether whites should be allowed to join the fight against apartheid, said the Nobel Committee had rewarded "an oppressor" by giving the prize to Mr. De Klerk.

Benny Alexander, general secretary of the PAC, said it was "The first time in history that an oppressor has been called a man of peace."

Mr. De Klerk has admitted he authorised the Transkei raid, but said it was only after he had received concrete evidence that the house was used as a guerrilla base by the PAC's military wing, the Azanian People's Liberation Army (APLA).

"I did not order that children be killed," he said in a radio interview Friday, adding that he would have been irresponsible not to have taken pre-emptive steps to prevent guerrilla attacks on South African citizens.

N. Korea says it would act against sanctions

TOKYO (R) — North Korea said Saturday it would act in self-defence if the international community tried to impose sanctions against Pyongyang over its refusal to allow inspections of its nuclear facilities.

A U.S. State Department spokesman said Friday the United States could push for U.N. sanctions against North Korea within weeks if Pyongyang does not let international inspectors visit two suspected nuclear sites.

"There's not a specific deadline that has been set, but it's clear that if the continuity of safeguards themselves are broken... we have to refer the matter back to the United Nations Security Council for further discussion and for direct action," spokesman Michael McCurry said.

Japan has also openly expressed its concern over Pyongyang's nuclear programme which communist North Korea insists is for peaceful purposes only.

North Korea, whose economy has been hit badly by the collapse of the Soviet Bloc, responded quickly to the threat of sanctions.

"If Japan and other hostile forces venture something like international sanctions, we will have no other alternative but to take an appropriate self-defensive measure," a Foreign Ministry spokesman said, quoted by the official Korean Central News Agency monitored in Tokyo.

He gave no details.

It is not clear whether China, the closest ally of North Korea, would support a proposal for U.N. sanctions or what form those measures would take.

Earlier Saturday, the Communist Party newspaper Rodong Sinmun said the only way to resolve the crisis was direct talks with Washington.

The nuclear issue on the Korean peninsula can be settled only between the DPRK (North Korea) and the United States because it is the United States that caused this problem and is standing in the way of its solution," the official daily said.

It said the nuclear problem began when the United States brought nuclear weapons into South Korea.

North Korea has balked at inspection of the suspected sites by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

"No third party can take the place of the United States. Herein lies another reason why the nuclear issue on the Korean peninsula can be solved only through DPRK (North Korea)-USA talks," the daily said.

Mr. McCurry said Washington could push for U.N. sanctions against Pyongyang within weeks if it does not let IAEA inspectors visit the two suspected nuclear plants.

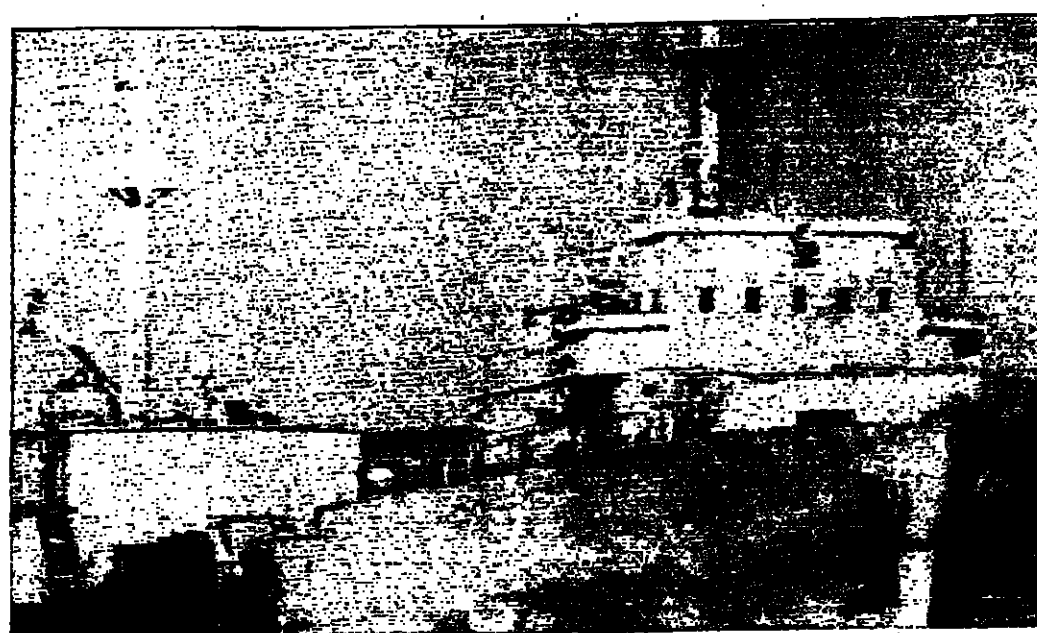


Photo supplied by Greenpeace shows the Russian Navy tanker TNS-27 bound for a dump site in the Sea of Japan to discharge radioactive waste (AFP photo)

Russians caught trying to dump nuclear waste in Sea of Japan

TOKYO (AFP) — A Greenpeace vessel off the coast of the Russian Far East intercepted Saturday a Russian Navy shipload of radioactive waste into the Sea of Japan, the international environmental group said.

"The dumping convoy is expected to reach its dumpsite in the Sea of Japan, around 240 nautical miles west of Hokkaido, later tonight," Greenpeace's Tokyo office said.

Greenpeace said the Russian Navy shipload of radioactive waste was being towed by a tug and escorted by a scientific monitoring vessel — the Pavlovsk submarine base 50 kilometres east of Vladivostok at 9:30 (0030 GMT), Japan Broadcasting Corp.

(NHK) showed footage of three vessels heading out to sea in its main evening news bulletin, accompanied by separate footage shot from the Greenpeace ship showing close-ups of a convoy on the high seas.

NHK said the tanker was capable of carrying 900 tonnes of liquid waste.

Greenpeace said its investigations showed the waste was "primarily reactor coolant and cleaning waters from the Russian Pacific Fleet's dilapidated nuclear-powered submarines."

But it added that its patrol vessel reported seeing "several containers" on the deck of the tanker "which could be solid radioactive waste."

The liquid waste is expected to be "dumped directly into the sea with no containment,"

the group said. "The accompanying monitoring vessel is believed to be measuring for gamma radiation at the dumpsite."

"Russia is clearly hoping that no one will notice," Greenpeace activist John Sprange said from aboard the group's Dutch-registered vessel, which left Hokkaido last week with a 24-member international crew.

Japan is to protest Russian plans to resume dumping of radioactive waste into the Sea of Japan, Kyodo News Service quoted a Foreign Ministry official as saying Saturday.

"Japan will express concern about this dumping," a ministry official told the Japanese News Agency.

Blaze destroys part of Kashmir shrine

SRINAGAR, India (AFP) — A fire destroyed a wooden prayer hall at an Islamic shrine housing a holy relic here Saturday as several thousand Indian troops laid siege to the complex to flush out Kashmiri Muslim militants holed up inside.

Police arrested 25 suspected militants who tried to flee the shrine where a lock of the Prophet Muhammad's hair is on display. But several dozen other armed rebels remained barricaded inside, officials said.

The siege by up to 10,000 army soldiers and paramilitary border security force troops began late Friday after Muslim gunmen allegedly opened fire from inside the shrine, killing a student who was passing by.

An official spokesman of the Kashmir administration stressed that the blaze did not damage the white-stone Hazratbal Shrine itself but engulfed an older section of the complex where Muslim women are permitted to pray.

Deafening explosions at 12:40 p.m. (0710 GMT) preceded the inferno in the prayer hall near the shrine overlooking Nagin Lake, witnesses said.

Ram Mohan Rao, the Kashmir administration's main spokesman, accused Muslim secessionists of torching the hall which also served as a hostel for pilgrims.

"The holy relic of Prophet Mohammad is safe, but the prayer hall is completely gutted," said a fire department spokesman after firefighters

managed to extinguish the blaze.

Officials said an unspecified number of pilgrims were believed to be inside the hilltop shrine, officials said. Troops sealed off access to the complex and used loudspeakers to make repeated appeals on the militants to surrender.

"Militants tried to camouflage themselves as pilgrims and escape. So we have to screen them all," said Kashmir's newly appointed Police Chief, M.N. Sabarwal after police rounded up the 25 suspected rebels.

Kashmiri officials said "Operation Flushout" had been ordered amid fears that the militants would try to remove the holy relic in a bid to spark Muslim protests in Kashmir.

NEWS IN BRIEF

500 Tamils detained in Sri Lanka

COLOMBO (Agencies) — Sri Lankan troops rounded up about 500 Tamil youths in a single day of search operations around Colombo as part of tight security measures to capture Tamil rebels in the capital, military sources said Saturday. Heavily armed government forces Friday searched houses in various parts of Colombo for members of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), the sources said. The island newspaper reported Saturday that Sri Lanka's Tamil Tiger guerrillas deployed nine back-up suicide bombers along a parade route in case the rebel who blew up President Ranasinghe Premadasa in May botched his mission. The independent paper's lead story said nine Tamil rebels wearing "body-bombs" had been in the May Day procession in Colombo, a safe distance from where Mr. Premadasa was blown up by a rebel who also had explosives strapped to his body. "If (the assassin) did not get his quarry, they would have moved in and blasted themselves along with the president," the paper quoted a detained Tamil rebel activist as telling police investigators.

U.K. may drop plans for missile

LONDON (R) — The British Air Force could be forced to drop plans for a new tactical nuclear air-to-surface missile to replace its ageing free-fall bombs under defence spending cuts, political sources said Saturday. Defence Secretary Malcolm Rifkind is expected to tell parliament next week that the government is to shelve the plans, the sources said. The Defence Ministry refused to comment on whether or not Mr. Rifkind would make such an announcement.

U.N. flight reaches Angolan city

JOHANNESBURG (R) — U.N. aid workers Friday flew their first mercy mission to the central Angolan city of Cuíto in nine months and described a "Dante's Inferno" where 15,000 to 35,000 people had died during a UNITA rebel siege. A spokeswoman for the U.N. World Food Programme (WFP) in Harare said her colleagues in Angola described a city devastated by war where 30 to 40 people were dying daily from starvation. "They said it was worse than anyone had thought, just like Dante's Inferno," Mercedes Sayaguez told Reuters by telephone. "At least 15,000 are dead, maybe 20,000, and it could go as high as 35,000." Ms. Sayaguez said U.N. officials in Luanda were meeting urgently to believe what kind of food and medications to fly in. She said the U.N. assessment team which returned to Luanda Friday after a one-day mission to assess humanitarian need in Cuíto said the one hospital was packed with 1,200 wounded from mines and fighting and had no pills or medicine.

Spain's Fraga makes last stand

MADRID (R) — Spain's most durable and controversial right-wing politician, Manuel Fraga Iribarne, fights his last political battle Sunday when he bids for re-election as president of the autonomous region of Galicia. A minister under dictator Francisco Franco and in the government immediately after Gen. Franco's death, Mr. Fraga heads the conservative Popular Party (PP) drive to retain change of the poor region of northwest Spain for a further four years. Mr. Fraga, 71, is adamant this will be the last time he stands for senior political office.

First lady dishes peas, repeat of broccoli-gate?

NEW YORK (R) — One lesson the Clintons apparently didn't learn from the Bush administration was that you should never criticise a vegetable. Pea growers and processors are defending the vegetable after Hillary Rodham Clinton, the administration's health guru, said Thursday that "hardly anybody likes green peas." "Peas are holding their own. We think there's a large group of consumers who want peas," shot back Terry Thompson, a spokesman for Pillsbury's Green Giant Vegetables in Minneapolis. Mr. Thompson, stressing they were taking the whole flap in good humour, said that peas account for "significant part of our business in canned and frozen." Former President George Bush provoked a storm of criticism when he said he never liked broccoli. "I am president of the United States and I am not going to eat any more," he said. The first lady's comments came during a New York taping session for the "Sesame Street" television programme.

Veteran wins \$75,000 for stress from movie

SANTA ROSA, California (AP) — A veteran who said he flashed back to a Vietnam battlefield when explosions and gunfire erupted on the set of a Sylvester Stallone movie received \$75,000, in an out-of-court settlement, his lawyer said. Universal Pictures failed in its promise to warn Ed Munis before setting off explosions near his Santa Rosa home during the 1991 filming of Stop Or My Mom Will Shoot his lawyer, James Barrett, said. A call to Universal Pictures' lawyer for comment Friday was not immediately returned. Explosions, gunfire and the sound of a landing C-119 cargo plane convinced Mr. Munis that he was back watching the North Vietnamese overrun his infantry company, his lawyer said. "Munis was truly back in Vietnam. He grabbed his wife, threw her on the floor and was looking for VC to come through the window," Mr. Barrett said. "He had a true psychotic break." Mr. Munis, 46, received the Purple Heart and the Bronze Star for his army service. Veterans Affairs had designated him 50 per cent disabled from post-traumatic stress disorder, but after Mr. Munis' movie-related flashbacks that was increased to 100 per cent.

Roberts, Hannah worst dressed — People magazine

NEW YORK (R) — Actresses Daryl Hannah and Julia Roberts may have found love this year but it has done nothing to improve their wardrobes, according to People magazine. The gossip weekly put both stars on its list of the 10 worst dressed people of the year. On the more positive side, people also released the 10 best dressed list, a group that includes talk-show host Joan Rivers, U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher and Actress Sharon Stone, better known on screen for what she leaves out of her wardrobe. Hannah, who is dating John F. Kennedy Jr., was called a sartorial eyesore by the magazine. Roberts, who recently wed singer Lyle Lovett, was described as a worst-dressed "veteran," a label that has done little to hurt her popularity over the years. It said her wedding dress, bought by Lovett, was "the most stylish thing she wore all year." Whoopi Goldberg, who has been enough controversy following her X-rated Roast by the Friars Club in New York earlier this month, was criticised for a wardrobe that runs "from workout gear and sneakers to her green and grape-juice-coloured, Oscar® gown." Men were also not spared, with Ben Reynolds, singers Garth Brooks and Anthony Keidis, and actor Robert Downey Jr. running afoul of People's fashion monitors.

Joseph Kennedy to wed on Oct. 23

BOSTON (AP) — U.S. Rep. Joseph Kennedy said Friday he and fiancée Beth Kelly will wed on Oct. 23 in a small civil ceremony at his home. The 41-year-old Boston Democrat is the oldest son of the late U.S. Sen. Robert Kennedy. Ms. Kelly is an aide in his Washington office. The marriage will be the first for Mr. Kennedy, who is divorced from Sheila Rauch. Mr. Kennedy, a Roman Catholic, is seeking a church annulment of his first marriage, but his ex-wife is opposing the request. The Catholic Church prohibits remarriage after divorce unless one obtains an annulment declaring a previous marriage was not valid in the eyes of the church. Cardinal Bernard Law, the Archbishop of Boston, said Mr. Kennedy's request would be handled like any other filed with the archdiocesan marriage tribunal.

Maradona to captain Argentina against Australia

BUENOS AIRES (R) — Diego Maradona will return as Argentina's captain for the two-leg World Cup play-off against Australia, team coach Alfio Basile said after announcing his 17-man squad.

The matches, in Sydney on Oct. 31 and in Buenos Aires on Nov. 17, will determine which of the two sides qualify for next year's finals in the United States.

The Argentina-based players will fly to Sydney Monday, while the remaining seven, who play in Europe and Japan, will report on Oct. 25. Basile said he may call upon more players in the next few days.

The return of Maradona to spearhead Argentina's bid for what would be their sixth successive appearance in the finals, comes after he fell out with Basile following his exclusion from the recent qualifying series.

The coach had been under pressure to recall Maradona since September's humiliating 5-0 home defeat by Colombia, a result that almost ended the



Diego Maradona

1986 world champions' prospects of reaching the U.S. finals.

Maradona has lost 12 kilos over the past month in a bid to recover the form of his glory days.

And after marking his return to the Argentine League with two impressive displays for new club Newell's Old Boys, Maradona won rave reviews from Basile, who said the doors to the national team were open for him.

Basile has made five changes to the squad that played in the qualifiers, calling up defenders Victor Hugo Solomayor, Carlos Javier Mac Allister and Jose Chamot, midfielder Hugo

Leonardo Perez and striker Abel Balbo.

Balbo was discarded from Basile's plans after Argentina's defeat by Cameroon in the opening match of the 1990 World Cup finals. His return to favour is a reflection of the player's rich scoring vein for Italy's Roma.

The players making way for the newcomers are Nestor Criviotto, Fabian Basualdo, Julio Saldana, Roberto Ayala, Neter Gorosito, and Alberto Acosta.

Defender Oscar Ruggeri, who was captain for the qualifiers, and midfielder Diego Simeone, were ruled out by suspension.

Manchester United help lift English gloom

LONDON (AFP) — Manchester United's internationals bounced back from mid-week World Cup disappointments to beat Tottenham 2-1 and stretch their English Premiership lead to seven points Saturday.

The champions showed signs of a hangover from Wednesday's drama in a tepid first half but the game sparked into life when Roy Keane, a member of the Ireland team humiliated by Spain, rifled a right foot drive past Eric Thorstved in the 65th minute.

Five minutes later United delighted the Old Trafford crowd when Eric Cantona — part of the French team stunned by Israel in Paris — put England's Lee Sharpe in for a second goal.

United looked completely in control but some slack defending allowed Spurs to pull one goal back in the 73rd minute. Fullback Justin Edinburgh moved into the area and pulled the ball back for Darren Caskey to score.

Alex Ferguson's side nearest rivals Arsenal were held to a 0-0 draw at home to Manchester City.

Norwich, who had won their last two visits to Stamford Bridge, wasted no time making it three against Chelsea, with Ruel Fox rattling home from close range to give them a 22nd minute lead.

The Canaries, who face Bayern Munich in the UEFA Cup Tuesday, failed to convert four more chances in the first half, thanks to some excellent work by Chelsea's Russian goalkeeper Dmitri Khariin.

But Chris Sutton finally beat him in the 69th minute to give the visitors a two goal cushion.

Gavin Peacock pulled one back for Chelsea eight minutes from time but Norwich held out to leapfrog Arsenal into second place on goal difference.

Vinnie Jones was Wimbledon's hero with a last minute equaliser against Sheffield Wednesday at Hillsborough.

Former England winger Chris Waddle, thrust into a striker's role by manager Trevor Francis, responded with his first goal of the season to give Wednesday a ninth minute lead.

Gary Blissett equalised just after the break but Wednesday youngster Ryan Jones seemed to have killed off the Dons six minutes from time with a shot on the turn before his namesake popped up right at the death.

Newcastle's Malcolm Allen missed a last minute penalty as Kevin Keegan's side lost their ten match unbeaten record at home to QPR.

Les Ferdinand, badly missed by England in midweek, returned to action to give QPR a tenth minute lead.

The striker was injured Wednesday when defeat by Holland all but eliminated England from the World Cup.

Ferdinand enjoyed the luck England were desperately lacking in Rotterdam when his 16-yard shot hit both posts before crossing the line.

Bradley Allen got QPR's other goal with Malcolm Allen scoring for Newcastle.

There was also late drama at Anfield where Liverpool rescued victory from what looked like a certain defeat after Oldham's Jason Beckford had given the visitors the lead 18 minutes from time.

WARNING



The Philippine servant Teodula G. Saccalan (Daly) has left her sponsor's house on Saturday 28-9-93 and has not returned until now. The said servant stole 2 golden rings and we hereby warn any person hiding her that he/she shall be considered as a partner in this crime. We shall not be responsible for her actions. If anybody knows anything about her, contact Zahran Police Station, or any other police office or Tel. No. 668962

S. Korea go to the front of Asian World Cup hopefuls

DOHA (AFP) — South Korea scored a classy 3-0 win over Iran to take a goal difference lead at the start of the Asian World Cup qualifying contest here Saturday.

Soccer experts Noh Jung-Yoon and Kim Joo-Sung were the architects of the victory that puts South Korea just ahead of rivals North Korea in the table with all six nations having all played one game.

Noh, who plays in Japan's J-League, and Kim, who is leading VFL Bochum's drive for promotion to the German first division, were a constant problem for the Iranian defence.

They played a role in nearly all the goals by Park Jung-Bae, Ha Seok-Ju and substitute Ko Jeong-Woon.

South Korea were cheered on by 1,000 frenzied fans beating gongs and drums. On the other side of the Al Khalifa Stadium were more than 1,000 expatriate Iranians in Qatar who released six white doves just before the game started.

But South Korea gave no peace to the Iranian defence. Noh Jung-Yoon, midfielder with Sanfrecce Hiroshima in the J-League, made several runs that caught Iranian defenders flatfooted.

Noh was brought down in the ninth minute on the edge of the penalty area for his side's first chance. Kim Joo-Sung fired the free kick just wide of the post.

South Korea's attractive football paid off in the 18th minute. Noh put across a cor-

ner that bobbed to Park Jung-Bae. The defender fired the ball home from short range before Iranian goalkeeper Bezhad Gholampour and a teammate holding the goal line.

South Korea eased the pace in the second half but packed their defence to stop any real threat of an equaliser.

Ali Daei hit a speculative long shot that was the first real threat to South Korean goalkeeper Choi In-Young.

But Choi produced a brilliant leap to tip a Mehdi Foni-Zadegan shot just over the bar.

South Korea were revived by two substitutions. As the Iranians tired Ha Seok Ju fired in a cross from Seo Jung Woon which the goalkeeper failed to intercept.

Two minutes later Gholampour was again at fault as he left his line and defender Javad Zarinecheh also backed off to leave Ko Jeong Woon with a clean shot into goal after running 30 yards with the ball.

The two Korean sides have now made the best start to the two week contest. They are the only teams to have won their opening games. North Korea also scored three, but as they conceded two goals to Iraq Friday they are second in the standings on goal difference.

Japan and Saudi Arabia, who draw 0-0 are third and fourth. Iran and Iraq bring up the rear.

The top two teams in the group will qualify for America '94.

French match-rigging scandal takes new twist

PARIS (AFP) — France's match-rigging scandal took a new twist Saturday, when an ex-Marseille player reportedly said that the French Football Federation urged him to bring down club President Bernard Tapie.

The affair has centred on Marseille's former General Manager Jean-Pierre Bernes and defender Jean-Jacques Eydelie, who are accused of offering bribes to three Valenciennes players last season.

But French daily Liberation claims that compromising tapes of telephone conversations last month between Eydelie, then in Argentina, and Federation chief Jean Fournet-Fayard, have been found to the judge in the case.

The claims about the tapes, which were apparently handed over by Eydelie to Judge Bernard Boffy during an audition

in Valenciennes on Oct. 1, were quickly denied by Fournet-Fayard Saturday.

"What a caricature," he said. "There is absolutely no question of that happening."

Liberation claimed that the tapes reveal the federation chief telling Eydelie that if he changed his testimony to implicate Tapie, he would stand every chance of being allowed to play football in France again.

But Fournet-Fayard hit back at the report, telling RTL Radio, "I cannot promise things... that I can't control. What's more, it's obvious that if Eydelie comes back, he has a chance of playing football in France again. If he doesn't come, he has no chance. It's as simple as that."

"It's my opinion that people are once again trying to confuse the situation. Leave us

FIFA gave an official conduct warning to Iraq Saturday just before launching the Fair Play Award at the Asian World Cup final qualifying tournament here.

After their side were beaten 3-2 by North Korea in the opening match Friday, No Iraqi team official would attend the post-match press conference.

International federation regulations make it compulsory for a representative to attend news conferences. But the Iraqis were said to be very angry about the defeat and having one player sent off just before they gave up their two goal lead.

"We have sent them a letter telling them they must send someone to all subsequent match press conferences. If they fail they will be fined," said a FIFA official.

The warning and the sending off will count heavily against Iraq in the Fair Play Award. But FIFA Secretary General Sepp Blatter was adamant Saturday that if Iraq qualify for the World Cup finals next year then the American hosts could not refuse them.

He said the U.S. Soccer Federation gave them a written pledge from the U.S. Congress in 1987 that all 24 finalists and FIFA members and officials would get visas.

"We have no doubts. In fact we have no right to doubt an official decision by the Congress of America or any other country," Blatter told AFP.

Japan let down the kimono-

clad groupies who followed them on the World Cup trail to Qatar with a drab 0-0 draw against Saudi Arabia Friday.

More than 1,500 young converts of the new J-League, who treat the national players like pop stars, saw their heroes held on the opening day of the final Asian qualifying tournament.

Saudi Arabia brought 6,000 people across the border for the game. But their team were just as uninspired.

The crowd saw more action in the opening match of the double bill when North Korea fought back from two down to beat Iraq 3-2.

"I expected better," said Riye Yohunori, a 20-year-old Tokyo secretary who paid \$5,000 for a two-week trip to Doha where alcohol is banned and women normally keep their faces covered in line with Muslim tradition.

Yohunori and the other Japanese girls who paint their faces with the national flag and beat drums throughout the games expect more from their team in other games.

"I want more goals, more action," added Yohunori.

The match highlighted Japan's lack of scoring power that could handicap their chances of being one of Asia's two sides in next year's World Cup finals in America.

They needed an extra-time goal to beat African champions Ivory Coast in the Afro-Asian Cup final in Tokyo this month. There is a desperate need for a big striker to lead the attack.

Lendl moves into Tokyo final

TOKYO (R) — Defending champion Ivan Lendl overcame a first set deficit and nailbiting tie-break Saturday to reach the final of the Seiko Super Men's Indoor Tennis Tournament.

Lendl outlasted unseeded Paul Haarhuis of the Netherlands 3-6, 6-4, 7-6 (7-5).

The 33-year-old Czech-born American, a surprise victor over second seed Boris Becker in the quarterfinals, will face 10th seed Todd Martin of the United States in Sunday's final.

Martin, who beat Lendl in three close sets in the first round of the Australian Indoor Tournament in Sydney last week, earlier downed Greg Rusedski of Canada 7-6 (7-5) 6-3.

Lendl, who has been suffering his worst season in 10 years, after stumbling at the first hurdle in nine tournaments so far this year, got off to a sluggish start.

He dropped his first service

game and failed to crack the powerful serve of Haarhuis, conqueror of fourth seed Andrei Medvedev in the quarterfinals.

But using his flashing return, coupled with some lucky line-calls, Lendl managed to break to secure the second set.

In the final set, Lendl squandered five break points at 4-4, and went down 1-4 in the tie-break on Haarhuis's serve.

But Haarhuis, ranked 62 in the world, was irked by some suspect line-calls and appeared to lose confidence on the big points, eventually allowing the former world number 1 into the final.

"I was playing well mentally and didn't give any silly points away," Lendl said.

The fast-improving 10th seed Todd Martin maintained the form which helped him oust top seed Stefan Edberg in the quarterfinals, to overcome a spirited challenge from Rusedski in the day's other

semifinal.

After winning the first set in a close tie-breaker, Martin took advantage of a lapse in concentration from his 20-year-old opponent, to break serve in the third game.

The 130th ranked Rusedski, enjoying the best tennis of his career this week after pulling off upsets against Michael Chang, Wayne Ferreira and Richard Krajicek, was unable to convert five break points to pull even.

The match was a battle of the booming serves with few long ball exchanges. Rusedski, who has one of the fastest serves in the game, pounded 15 aces to Martin's five.

"My strategy was not to get killed by Greg's serve and to make the most of chances from his second serve," Martin said.

Lendl, a "wimmer" here in 1983, 1986, 1990 and 1992 and making his eleventh appearance, will be looking to capture his second title of the year Sunday.

Duisburg end Eintracht Frankfurt's unbeaten run

BONN (R) — Leaders Eintracht Frankfurt's unbeaten run in the German first division ended Friday when they suffered a surprise 1-0 defeat at newly-promoted Duisburg.

A superb headed goal from striker Michael Preetz, who was brought into the Duisburg team only because of an injury to Uwe Weidemann, ended Eintracht's dream run of 11 games without defeat.

Frankfurt's three-point lead at the top of the Bundesliga is sure to come under pressure when their rivals are in action Saturday.

Second-placed Werder Bremen have a good chance to narrow the gap when they visit struggling Freiburg. Fourth placed Hamburg, a further two points behind, travel to Borussia Dortmund.

Last week Eintracht equalled Bayern Munich's record Bundesliga start for the first 11 games when they reached 20 points after a 2-1 victory over VFB Leipzig.

But Friday they seemed to miss the sharpness of their injured striker Anthony Yeboah in attack against a spirited Duisburg side who ran for everything.

Duisburg's victory lifted them three places to third, four points behind the leaders.

They deserved the two points after Preetz rose brilliantly to head the 42nd minute winner following a cross from midfielder Alois Schwartz.

| AMMAN LITTLE LEAGUE | | | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|---|----|------------------|---|
| Results of the League Little Football games up to Oct. 15, 1993 | | | | |
| SENIORS | | | | |
| Foxboro | 4 | VS | American Kitchen | 2 |
| Austrian A/L | 3 | VS | Champions | 0 |
| MIDS | | | | |
| Intervec | 8 | VS | ASC | 1 |
| Al Hikma | 6 | VS | Peugeot | 3 |
| JUNIORS II | | | | |
| Jungheun | 0 | VS | Milano | 0 |
| Nash/BB | 2 | VS | Pepsi | 0 |
| JUNIORS I | | | | |
| El Zay | 2 | VS | UPS | 0 |
| La Cigra | 2 | VS | Modern Schools | 0 |

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF & TAMMAM HIRSHI
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A LITTLE GIFT FOR THE NEW YEAR

Both vulnerable. Best deals.

NORTH
♠ A 7 3
♥ K 10 8 5 2
♦ 9 4
♣ K Q

WEST
♠ 10 4
♥ 7 3
♦ A K 3 2
♣ A 8 6 4

EAST
♠ K J
♥ 9 4
♦ 10 8 5 7 5
♣ 9 7 5 3 2

SOUTH
♠ Q 8 7 5 2
♥ A Q 3
♦ Q 8
♣ J 10

The bidding:
West North East South
Pass 1♥ Pass 1♠
Pass 2♠ Pass 3♠
Pass 4♠ Pass Pass

Opening lead: King of ♠

A happy and healthy new year to all our readers. We hope the new year delivers a grand slam in everything you wish for yourselves.

South got his side off to a grand start on this deal. With the jack of hearts probably a wasted card and uncertainty of whether the minor-suit honors were of any worth, South could do no more than invite game

after partner raised. North's fourth trump was a key factor in the decision to bid game.

West led the king and ace of diamonds, then shifted to a heart. It seemed the contract hinged on not losing a trump trick and with 10 cards in the suit missing the king, the percentage play is to finesse. However, declarer decided to do some detective work before committing to a critical play in the trump suit.

After winning the heart in hand, declarer led a club toward dummy's honors. West shot up with the ace and reverted to a heart, taken in the closed hand. Now declarer knew all that was necessary to adopt a line of play. Do you?

West, a passed hand, had already shown up with 11 points in high cards—two aces and a king. With the king of spades as well, West would surely have opened the bidding. Since East had to have the king of spades, the only chance to land the game was to apply the Rabbit's Rule: "If the king is singleton, play the ace." Declarer continued with a spade to the ace, and great was the fall thereof. Four spades bid and made.

| | | | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>PHILADELPHIA</p> <p>PACINO — in</p> <p>SCENT OF A WOMAN</p> <p>Shows: 12:30, 3:15, 6:15, 9</p> <p>Thursday and Friday at 11:00 a.m.</p> <p>BEETHOVEN</p> | <p>CONCORD</p> <p>CONCORD '1'</p> <p>Datsun Horvan — in</p> <p>Accidental Hero</p> <p>Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30</p> <p>CONCORD '2'</p> <p>Faten Hamameh — in</p> <p>Land of Dreams</p> <p>Shows: 12:30, 3:15, 6:00, 8:15, 10:15</p> | <p>PLAZA</p> <p>Sharihan in:</p> <p>The greatest musical film</p> <p>"Crystal"</p> <p>Shows at 12:30, 3:00, 5:00, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30</p> | <p>Nabli Al Mashini Theatre</p> <p>presents a play entitled:</p> <p>Al Iim Nuron</p> <p>A popular political comedy</p> <p>Actors: Abber Issa, Daoud Jaleel, Hassan Al Shaer, Fuad Shomali</p> <p>In addition to other comedians</p> <p>Every night at 8:15</p> <p>Tickets are sold all day</p> | <p>NAHLI & HISHAM'S TEL: 625153</p> <p>AHLAN THEATRE</p> <p>The political comedy</p> <p>WELCOME ARAB SUMMIT</p> <p>Daily 8:30 p.m.</p> <p>The theatre closes Saturday and Sunday</p> <p>English synopsis available</p> |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

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Security Council orders naval blockade of Haiti

Combined agency dispatches

UNITED NATIONS — The U.N. Security Council voted Saturday to allow naval enforcement of the oil and arms embargo reimposed against Haiti this week.

In a resolution initiated by the United States, the council unanimously approved the interception and search of any vessels headed to or coming from the Caribbean nation.

The United States deployed six warships off Haiti after the sanctions were approved to force the country's military leaders to comply with an agreement to restore democracy.

The embargo is due to begin Monday at 11:59 p.m. (0359 GMT Tuesday) unless Haitian military authorities allow the reinstatement of ousted President Jean-Bertrand Aristide by Oct. 30 and the deployment of a U.N. mission to help rebuild Haiti's military infrastructure.

The oil and arms embargo was reimposed Wednesday in order to pressure Haiti's military leaders to comply with the July agreement between Mr. Aristide and the military that toppled him.

The U.N. sanctions were first imposed in June but were suspended two months later when it appeared that progress was being made towards the restoration of democratic rule.

But the violent protests earlier this week in Port-au-Prince which prevented U.S. and Canadian troops from landing and the assassination of Haiti's justice minister have dimmed hopes for Mr. Aristide's return by the end of the month.

U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Madeleine Albright told the council that Washington would use its diplomatic and military power to enforce the sanctions.

France and Argentina may also participate in the naval enforcement of the embargo.

"There should be no doubt about the determination of the United States and the community of nations," Ms. Albright said in a speech. "My government will use its diplomatic and military power to see that economic sanctions work, and to ensure that these sanctions serve to shield the flickering flame of Haitian

democracy. "We call upon Haiti's military leaders to take immediate steps this weekend to reaffirm their commitment to the Governors Island agreement. There is still time for them to heed the will of their own people and the will of the international community."

On Wednesday the council reimposed sanctions banning arms, military and police supplies and petroleum, except for fuel for household use and humanitarian purposes. Food and other trade is not prohibited. Foreign assets of the anti-democratic forces also are to be frozen.

The council also warned the de facto Haitian authorities that it would consider further measures to compel them to abide by the political settlement reached in July on New York's Governors Island and other U.N. resolutions.

On Friday, President Bill Clinton announced that six warships would be deployed outside Haitian waters to enforce the U.N. sanctions. The action amounts to blockade, although that term has not been used because it can connote an act of war.

Meanwhile, the last U.S. soldiers in Haiti left the country on Saturday. The group of 46 Americans and 17 Canadian non-combat soldiers had arrived in Haiti a week ago as an advance team under the U.N.-brokered peace accord.

The council resolution, initiated by the United States and co-sponsored by Canada, France and Venezuela, also holds out the threat of unspecified measures.

It calls on all U.N. members to take steps to ensure strict compliance with the sanctions, which include a ban on arms and oil imports, and in particular to halt inward maritime shipping as necessary to check their cargoes and destinations.

The resolution echoes language used previously by the council to interdict shipping suspected of violating U.N. sanctions against Iraq and the rump Yugoslavia.

The council acted as worsening violence in Haiti forced the evacuation of some 300 human rights monitors and other staff from the United Nations and

the Organisation of American States (OAS).

The justice minister in a recently installed pro-Aristide government, Guy Malary, was assassinated on Thursday. Earlier, a two-day rampage by army-backed gunmen prevented the disembarkation of some 250 U.S. and Canadian troops, sent to Haiti as part of a U.N. mission to help with the transition to democratic rule.

Haiti's pro-Aristide U.N. envoy, Fritz Longchamp, told the council that a "handful of evil-doers cannot go unscathed and keep hostage an entire population."

Haiti's army chief, General Raoul Cedras, should have resigned on Friday under the accord he signed less than four months ago for Mr. Aristide's return. But he has so far refused to do so.

The United States has sent several hundred marines to its naval base at Guantanamo, Cuba, ready if needed to help evacuate U.S. embassy staff in Port-au-Prince and any of the 1,000 Americans living in Haiti.

Pro-military groups have demanded that all "white foreigners" leave the country and a general strike has been scheduled for Monday, when the sanctions go into effect.

Aristide still hopeful

Mr. Aristide said Saturday the U.N. blockade should force the ouster of the military junta running that nation, possibly allowing him to return this month as scheduled.

Interviewed on CNN, Mr. Aristide repeated his opposition to sending foreign troops to Haiti, said he would not resign and said removal of Gen. Cedras and police chief Michel Francois was essential to restoring democracy.

"The only thing we have to continue doing is moving the way we are moving through this blockade, in order to have them out," Mr. Aristide said. "Let's move fast to remove the killers from the country."

Asked if he remained optimistic about returning to Haiti on Oct. 30 as set out in the peace agreement with the military leaders who overthrew him two years ago, Mr. Aristide said, "of course."



PADDLING FROM WORK: A French Franco-Riz employee leaves work on a small canoe in Arles, in the south of France where some 10,000 hectares have been flooded in the last few days by heavy rain falls (AFP photo)

Ekeus sees breakthrough in Iraq mission, says more needed

Combined agency dispatches

UNITED NATIONS — Baghdad's refusal to accept long-term U.N. monitoring of its weapons programmes is the biggest outstanding roadblock to the lifting of international sanctions on Iraq, a U.N. official says.

Rolf Ekeus, head of the commission overseeing elimination of Iraq's weapons of mass destruction, said he will hold further talks with Iraqi officials during a visit to New York in mid-November.

He also said he hoped that Deputy Prime Minister Tariq Aziz would give formal approval to long-term monitoring during the visit.

Iraq badly wants sweeping trade sanctions lifted, contending they are damaging its economy and causing suffering to its people. The sanctions have been in place since Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in August 1990.

In a report to the Security Council, Mr. Ekeus reported "considerable and substantial progress" in getting Iraq to provide information about its programmes for producing chemical and biological weapons and long-range missiles.

Speaking to reporters after meeting with the council, Mr. Ekeus said that Iraq still had not approved the U.N. resolution that requires long-term monitoring.

But an Arab diplomat who

attended the meeting said Mr. Ekeus was optimistic about Iraqi compliance. He quoted Mr. Ekeus as saying it would be "some months" before the oil embargo is lifted. He did not elaborate.

Under the terms of the Gulf war ceasefire, Iraq must accept the monitoring of its weaponry for the Security Council to lift the oil embargo. General trade sanctions, however, would remain until other conditions are met.

Mr. Ekeus received much of the information during a visit to Baghdad Oct. 2-8. Among the most crucial data he received was Iraq's list of foreign suppliers to its weapons programmes.

He wrote that Iraq had fully disclosed its past work on biological and ballistic missiles and that the United Nations hoped to certify full compliance on chemical weapons within two weeks.

On nuclear weapons, Mr. Ekeus said the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) was confident "that the essential elements of Iraq's nuclear weapons programme are understood and have been dismantled."

Iraq has held off agreeing to a U.N. Plan monitoring its industries meant to ensure it does not make new weapons of mass destruction. Baghdad contends it should first be rewarded by at least a partial easing of the sanctions.

In previous remarks, Mr.

Ekeus said it would take six months after all data was verified and the monitoring plans were accepted for the commission to report to the council that Iraq had complied with its weapons demands. His spokesman Tim Trevan said the clock for this timetable had "not started yet."

After a U.S.-led coalition drove Iraqi troops from Kuwait in the Gulf war, a ceasefire resolution banned oil exports until Iraq scrapped its dangerous weapons and the U.N. was sure they could not be reacquired.

Allowing imports to Iraq would involve meeting a host of other demands, including recognition of the border with Kuwait.

The report also included a section from the IAEA which said it was "confident that the essential elements of Iraq's nuclear weapons programme are understood and have been dismantled."

The IAEA said Iraq had provided critical information on supplies of its nuclear materials, which appeared to be complete but also needed to be verified in the next few weeks.

But the biggest stumbling block in declaring Iraq free of weapons was agreement on the monitoring programme.

Mr. Ekeus said Iraq wanted changes in the monitoring plans so it would not be forced to limit its "scientific, technical and economic development" in the future.

Bashir is president after junta disbands

NICOSIA (Agencies) — Lieutenant-General Omar Hassan Ahmad Al Bashir, Sudan's military ruler for four years, was appointed president of the republic Saturday, state radio said.

The ruling junta dissolved itself after making the appointment, said the radio monitored by the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC).

Lieutenant-General Omar Hassan Ahmad Al Bashir was charged with assuming the position of president of the republic, Sudan Radio said.

"This was done after all the members of the Revolutionary Command Council of the national salvation revolution resolved to dissolve the council voluntarily with effect from today," it said.

Gen. Bashir chaired the meeting himself, it added. Before naming its leader as chief of state, junta members issued a decree specifying Islamic laws as the basis of the Sudanese political system but guaranteeing freedom of religion.

Gen. Bashir had headed the Revolution Command Council since he spearheaded a bloodless June 30, 1989, coup that ousted a civilian government.

The significance of the switch to presidency was unclear. But it was not a sudden move as the council had already delegated most of its powers to a parliamentary body and to the council of ministers.

Gen. Bashir's 1989 coup toppled the civilian government of Oxford-educated Sadek Al Mahdi.

That government had lasted only three years after taking over from a military regime that ended former President Jaafar Numeiri's 16-year rule a year earlier. Since then, Gen. Bashir has been turning Sudan steadily into an Islamic state ruled by Sharia.

LT-Gen. Zubeir Mohammad Saleh, the junta's deputy leader, suggested Saturday's move.

"It was necessary after this period of more than four years to take such a courageous step to put a framework for the government, so Sudan can become like the countries around it," Gen. Saleh said.

He said the council had relinquished its political power to the cabinet, its legislative power to the transitional parliament and judicial to the judiciary.

Cuban writer arrested

HAVANA (AFP) — Cuban writer Norberto Fuentes has been arrested for attempting to slip out of the country, a human rights advocate said. Eliardo Sanchez Santa Cruz said the author, who won worldwide acclaim for his 1984 book *Hemingway in Cuba*, was taken into custody Sunday as he and an undisclosed number of relatives and friends were leaving Cuba by boat. In 1968 Mr. Fuentes was honoured by the Cuban Cultural Institute for a book detailing his years as a journalist covering the government's battles in the 1960s with rebels opposing President Fidel Castro's government.

32 admirals, general punished over tailhook

WASHINGTON (R) — Thirty-two U.S. Navy admirals, including the chief of naval operations, and a Marine general have received letters of censure or lesser reprimands in the 1991 tailhook sex harassment scandal, Navy Secretary John Dalton said Friday. The mid administrative punishments were announced after Defence Secretary Les Aspin's refusal this month to follow Mr. Dalton's recommendation Mr. Aspin demand the resignation of the chief of naval operations Frank Kelso for failure to exercise leadership in the incident. Defence officials said privately Mr. Aspin's move kept Mr. Dalton from imposing harsher punishment on senior officers who attended a Tailhook Association convention in Las Vegas at which women were fondled by male navy and Marine fliers. But Mr. Dalton said Friday he was punishing the admirals and one general, all of whom attended the convention, for failure to exercise proper leadership even though they did not directly take part in the harassment. He said three admirals had received strong letters of censure and the 30 other officers received lesser. "Non-punitive" punishments. The lesser punishments including a "letter of caution" to the 60-year-old Kelso do not go into personal files. The three who received letters of censure in their files were Retired Vice Admiral Richard Dunleavy and Active Rear Admirals Riley Mixson and Wilson Flagg. Adm. Dunleavy was at the time assistant chief of naval operations for air warfare, a post now held by Adm. Mixson. Adm. Flagg is a reserve admiral.

Ozone level hits record low

GENEVA (AFP) — Ozone levels over Antarctica sank to a record low this month, the World Meteorological Organisation (WMO) warned. Ozone measured during several consecutive days between the end of September and the beginning of October dropped to a level which constitutes "the lowest absolute daily minimum ever recorded in the history of ozone observations," according to the WMO. Rumen Bojkov, secretary of the International Ozone Commission, said readings taken from the Neumayer, Marambio and Syowa stations in Antarctica "revealed massive ozone destruction in the lower Stratosphere with local ozone nearly annihilated between 14 and 19 kilometres (8.4 and 11.4 miles)."

'1 in 5 New York secondary students have weapons'

NEW YORK (AFP) — Twenty-one per cent of New York secondary school students have told weapons to class, and 40 per cent were threatened physically in the past school year, a study released Friday showed. Of those who said they brought weapons to school, 68 per cent said their families supported their defending themselves with a handgun, knife or club, according to the study of 1,400 students carried out jointly by the New York mayor's office and federal authorities. Permanent metal detectors students have to pass through to enter 41 of the city's 160 high schools, and detectors in place part-time at 20 other schools, play a substantial role in deterring students' weapons use, the study said. The study also says there is a clear link between violence in the schools and in city neighbourhoods, and that homicide is the leading cause of death for youths aged 15 to 19 in New York City.

Hardliners announce new front to counter Arafat and peace deal

DAMASCUS (R) — Leaders of a 10-member Palestinian alliance have agreed to set up a new rejectionist front dedicated to replacing Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat and foiling his peace deal with Israel, officials said on Saturday.

The new group, called "the National, Democratic and Islamic Front," was formed following deliberations in Damascus late on Friday chaired by George Habash, leader of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP).

The Palestinian officials said the front would also work towards rebuilding the PLO along new guidelines and replacing Chairman Arafat.

On Friday, Dr. Habash said the new group "would work to foil the Gaza-Jericho agreement and rebuild the PLO on democratic bases."

Under the peace deal signed on Sept. 13, Palestinian self-rule will begin in the occupied Gaza Strip and the West Bank town of Jericho.

The formula at Friday's

meeting was a compromise between proposals by the Islamic fundamentalist Hamas movement which wanted a new Palestinian grouping and the rest of the alliance which sought to maintain the PLO but change its leadership.

The 10 leaders also "reaffirmed their decision to boycott any elections or bodies to be established in compliance with the Gaza-Jericho accord," one official said.

An elected Palestinian administration is to be established under the agreement.

The rejectionist Alliance of 10 was first formed following the PLO's approval of the Arab-Israeli peace talks that opened in Madrid in 1991. It groups four PLO factions, four anti-Arafat groups and two Islamic fundamentalist movements.

Officials said leaders of the 10 also agreed to speed up work to form a new leadership for the Palestinian uprising in the occupied territories which would group representatives of all the rejectionist movements.

The new uprising leadership

would replace three leaderships that have been guiding the uprising since it erupted in 1987.

Earlier on Saturday, a hard-line Palestinian leader said guerrillas opposed to the peace accord were prepared to fight the new Palestinian police force in the Gaza Strip and Jericho.

Brigadier Abu Ahmad Fua'd, military commander of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), said the group's main target was Israeli troops and settlers.

He did not wish to confront the Palestinian police force which is now being set up, he said.

"But if these police confront our forces and coordinate with the enemy then we will find ourselves in self-defence," he told Reuters.

The police were a hurdle but the PFLP was planning new tactics to deal with it, Brig. Fua'd added.

Israeli troops are to begin withdrawing in December to hand over to the new Palestinian police force.

Rabin ends Asia tour seeking Muslim recognition

Combined agency dispatches

SINGAPORE — Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin held talks here Saturday with Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong, ending a three-nation Asian tour that included a groundbreaking visit to Indonesia.

No details of Mr. Rabin's discussions with Mr. Goh were immediately available but a senior Israeli official said earlier that the talks would focus on Israel's recent peace accord with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO).

Mr. Rabin flew in late Friday for an overnight stay after a five-day official visit to China and a surprise stopover in Indonesia, the world's most populous Muslim nation, for a meeting with Indonesian President Suharto.

The senior Israeli official quoted Mr. Rabin as telling Singapore patriarch and former Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew at a meeting earlier Satur-

day that his visit to Jakarta should bolster prospects for improved ties between Israel and Islamic countries supporting the PLO.

"We hope that the dramatic changes taking place will have an effect on Israel's relations with others in the Far East like Malaysia, but some developments need their own pace," the official said.

Israeli government spokesman Uri Dromi told AFP earlier that Mr. Rabin hoped Asian nations would back his accord with the PLO to give peace a chance in the Middle East.

"Rabin believes that all countries can help in their own way and that every bit helps," Mr. Dromi said. "The idea is to give opponents to the peace plan incentive to drop their hostility."

In Jakarta, Indonesian Muslim leaders Saturday grudgingly accepted Mr. Rabin's surprise visit but said it is too soon

for Indonesia to recognise Israel.

Mr. Rabin was reaching out to holdouts against friendly ties with Israel in his unscheduled trip to Indonesia, one of the few nations in the region not to have established relations with the Jewish state.

Mr. Rabin talked with President Suharto for 90 minutes at the president's home in a meeting of unprecedented openness.

Still, Indonesia's state secretary, Mardiono, was careful to note that President Suharto participated in the meeting in his role as chairman of the Non-Aligned Movement and not as head of state.

Ali Yafie, a leader of the Indonesian Muslim Ulemas Council, said the Israeli-PLO peace accord meant Indonesia no longer had to shun the Jewish state.

"Rabin came here when he is no longer an enemy of the Palestinian people," said Mr.

Yafie.

Regarding diplomatic ties with Israel, however, Ichwan Sam, secretary-general of the Muslim Scholars Association, said: "Indonesia should consider the feelings of other Arab nations that have not yet recognised Israel."

Dr. Riza Sibudi of the Indonesian Institute of Sciences also opposed establishment of formal ties with Israel.

"Indonesia's foreign policy is against oppression and colonisation, which Israel is still practising," said Dr. Sibudi.

Mr. Mardiono, the state secretary minister, said the meeting did not mean Indonesia was planning diplomatic ties with Israel soon.

Israeli officials said no dramatic breakthrough was expected from talks between Mr. Rabin and Mr. Suharto although he expected the meeting would pave the way for lower-level discussions.

Egyptian interior minister vows to uproot extremists

CAIRO (AP) — Egypt's interior minister vehemently rejected on Saturday any suggestion of dialogue with "killers and outlaws" disguised as religious activists seeking Islamic rule in Egypt.

Hassan Al Alfi, who survived a July assassination attempt by members of the Jihad, also pledged to uproot the Muslim extremist movement; refused to say how many have been arrested in the campaign to do it; and denied persistent reports of torture in the prisons.

He told reporters prisoners "hit each other," then try to convince judges their wounds were caused by interrogators.

General Alfi became interior minister last April after allegations that his predecessor's harsh policies against extremists had escalated their violence. The government also said the minister had engaged radicals through intermediaries in unauthorised talks seeking a way out of the confrontation.

A reporter asked Gen. Alfi if he planned to renew the dialogue.

"Dialogue with whom? with killers and outlaws?" he responded. "This would mean that we are weak as a state. This is rejected... rejected."

But he said "uprooting these terrorist groups" is necessary for Egypt to implement needed economic changes. Otherwise, he said, lack of stability and security would prevent investments from coming in.

More than 200 people have died in an escalated two-year-old confrontation between Muslim extremists and the Egyptian government. Those killed included top government officials, police officers, Christian Copts, civilians and three foreign tourists.

The latest to die was Hilal Marzouk Nazir, a Christian agent of the secret police who was shot down at a train station Saturday a few hours before Gen. Alfi's news conference.

In a September newspaper interview, Jihad's jailed leader, former army Colonel Abdul Al Zomor, blamed "miscalculations by the regime and its arrogance" for the failure of the previous dialogue.

But he said executions of his men under anti-terrorism laws would make reconciliation more difficult now. "It is now difficult to persuade the leadership on the outside to stop its operations," Mr. Zomor said. "Feelings of anger control them."

The interior minister announced shortly after taking over that police were renouncing torture, taking families hostage for leverage against extremists and arbitrary detention.

However, recent reports by Amnesty International and other human rights advocates say the policies have continued under him. And members of extremist groups now on trial before courts-martial claim that torture is routine during

interrogation.

Gen. Alfi denied that. "Some of those (rights organisations) who repeat such talk are nothing but supporters of these groups," he said. He contended that extremists "hit each other inside prisons to claim that they were tortured in front of the court."

While insisting that all measures his officers take are according to law, he said: "I am not going to tell you how many are arrested, but everyone arrested is presented to the court. All his rights are guaranteed."

The Interior Ministry said Saturday's shooting was in a village near Assiut, 320 kilometres south of Cairo, as Nazir awaited a train to take him to work.

Assiut police blamed the killing on gunmen of Al Qamaa Al Islamiya. Witnesses said a woman standing on the same platform as Nazir was wounded by a bullet in her leg.

Sheikh maintains innocence

NEW YORK (Agencies) — The blind Muslim cleric charged in the World Trade Centre bombing said Friday he had nothing to do with the attack, and asked that attorneys William Kunstler and Ronald Kuby be allowed to defend him.

Sheikh Omar Abdul Rahman of Egypt is accused of masterminding a conspiracy to bomb the twin 110-storey trade centre towers and to plot other extremist acts.

Mr. Kunstler represents two other defendants in the case, Ibrahim Al Gabrowni and Siddig Ibrahim Siddig Ali. U.S. District Judge Michael Mukasey warned the sheikh that using lawyers already working for other defendants might pose a conflict of interest.

But Sheikh Abdul Rahman, whose attorney, Harry Batchelder, has asked to withdraw from the case, insisted he wants Mr. Kunstler and Mr. Kuby. Then he proclaimed his

innocence.

"All I know is that I had nothing to do with the case, other than I am a cleric who prays in a mosque," Sheikh Abdul Rahman said through an interpreter.

Mr. Mukasey said he would not make a final ruling on the request until he receives Mr. Kunstler's reply to a memo from prosecutors opposed to the switch. In the meantime, Mr. Kunstler will be allowed to represent the sheikh.

Six people were killed and more than 1,000 injured in the Feb. 26 trade centre bombing. Four people are on trial for the bombing.

Al Gabrowni and Mr. Siddig Ali are not part of the trial because charges against them stem from an alleged plot, never consummated, to bomb the United Nations, the Lincoln tunnel and other targets in New York. Their trial is not expected to begin for several months.

During Friday's hearing,

Judge Mukasey questioned the cleric about whether he understood the conflict of interest problems that could arise if his lawyers represented others charged in the case.

"That could hurt you," Mr. Mukasey told the cleric. "It could hurt you in a way that could result in your conviction."

"All I know is that I have nothing to do with this case," the white-robed cleric said. "I have nothing to do with anything, therefore there is no conflict of interest with others."

Sheikh Abdul Rahman was charged under a federal sedition law for allegedly encouraging the bombing.

Mr. Kunstler and Mr. Kuby told reporters after the hearing that the government's argument for disqualification had no merit and was just part of an effort to "get rid of us."

"They are trying to limit this to lawyers who are not of our stripe," Mr. Kunstler said.

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